

MARCH 14, 2011

Sen - white Paul P

Re: Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape/ Mercer County Plans for the Jacobs Creek Bridge (214.2) in Hopewell Township, NJ

TO ALL IT MAY CONCERN:

Please accept my apologies for the extensive packet provided. The documents and photographs included seem the shortest, most pertinent and current summary to enable a viable understanding of the situation surrounding the Mercer County plans for the reconstruction and realignment of Jacobs Creek Bridge, and the historical efforts being made to preserve this important site in Revolutionary and New Jersey history.

We will be contacting you shortly to ask for your support.

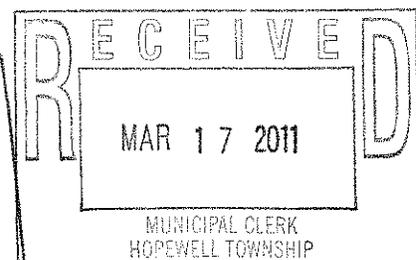
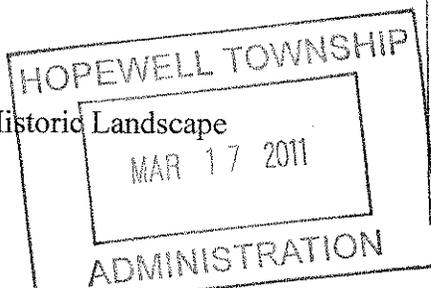
- As Mercer County forges ahead with its plans, the landscape surrounding the Jacobs Creek Bridge has already been determined to be Potentially Eligible for the State and National Register. The National Register application for the Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape is currently in process to be submitted for the June State Review.
- All efforts to provide County Executive Brian Hughes and the Engineering staff at Mercer County with the strength of the historical documentation gathered, and with the presentation for the Jacobs Creek Crossing, which has been shown at Patriot's Week in Trenton, and to the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders, have been refused. Letters of support from our most prestigious organizations and individuals in both the Historical and Preservation Communities have been ignored, as have the over 3,000 constituents who have voiced their opposition to the County's proposed project through petitions to Save the Victory Trail along the landscape, and to protect the already Nationally designated Historic Harbourton District in Hopewell Township.
- In his response letter of March 4, 2011 (included), Mr. Hughes comments on the "growth" in Hopewell Township. Yet here on Bear Tavern Road, other than the Janssen facility, there are less than 25 homes and a small Elementary school between the bridge and Washington's Crossing Road. Traffic continuing on through that intersection down Bear Tavern Road, would greatly affect the narrow and Historic Harbourton District, where some of the homes are a scant 10 feet from the road.
- The members of the Save the Victory Trail Coalition, and the Friends of Jacobs Creek Crossing, held a fund raising drive to enable the 3 applicants for the Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape to hire Cultural Consultant, Dennis Bertland Associates to prepare the National Register Application. It was a great effort on the part of these communities, and shows the dedication and determination to preserve this valuable historic and environmental resource. All of the properties included in our proposed district have given their consent.

We are excited to report, that on March 12, 2011, Dennis Bertland Associates, along with an archaeological crew, conducted a field study which included metal detection and digs, and artifacts have been found around the location of the identified "fording place" in our Preliminary Application.

They include a Liberty Head coin c. 1790, a stirrup, and several other items. Testing will be done to determine the significance of these findings. Photos are attached.

Sincerely,

Roni Browne Katz
Roni Browne Katz



Applicant- Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape



WASHINGTON'S
TORY TRAIL
1776



Subj: **Fwd: On behalf of County Executive Hughes- need printed**
Date: 3/14/2011 8:25:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: artchick4@aol.com
To: MK1197@aol.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Willmot, Julie <jwillmot@mercercounty.org>
To: artchick4@aol.com
Sent: Fri, Mar 11, 2011 2:03 pm
Subject: On behalf of County Executive Hughes

Dear Ms. Katz,

Thank you for your email.

Mercer County has conducted or participated in numerous meetings since 2006 regarding the replacement of the Bear Tavern Road Bridge over Jacobs Creek in Hopewell Township, and continues to offer an open public forum at each and every meeting of the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Mercer County plans to move forward with the project and will present to the freeholders for consideration a contract for engineering and design. That contract will be before the board at either its last meeting in March or its first meeting in April.

Thank you.

Brian M. Hughes

Mercer County Executive

Julie Willmot

Mercer County Director of Communications

McDade Administration Building

640 S. Broad St.

Trenton, N.J. 08611

(609) 278-7137

<http://twitter.com/MercerPIO>

This message has been scanned for malware by Websense. www.websense.com

Monday, March 14, 2011 America Online: MK1197

*Roni Braune Katz
52 Maddack Road
Titusville, NJ 08560*

March 6, 2011

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

Dear Mr. Hughes,

Thank you for your response to my previous letter of February 28, 2011 in regard to the **Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape** and the current County plans for the Jacobs Creek (Bear Tavern Road) Bridge. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration, and expect that I can rely on your staff to continuously keep me aware of the developments on this project (e.g. the selection of a design firm, designs submitted, designs approved, etc.) Is there a specific contact in your office who would be most able to provide me with the best information on a regular and timely basis?

Your response was thorough, but I feel it neglects certain critical issues and considerations. To highlight a few:

1. The county alternative (5B3) goes well beyond accommodating the inherent traffic in the area as evidenced by the lack of disruption from the bridge closing for the past 17 months. Your comments regarding the future traffic due to the construction of the new hospital seem without merit as the hospital will have direct access to Interstate 95 and is located on a four lane, divided thoroughfare. The community at large has grown over the years but the vast majority of Bear Tavern Road is either rural or residential, and constructing such a major bridge on this type of road does not seem appropriate in light of other facts, such as the more cost-effective alternative of rehabbing the existing bridge, and the fact that the site, not just the bridge, is **profoundly historic**.
2. 5B3 will encourage significant additional traffic, not for people traveling to Hopewell Twp., but rather for cars and trucks who will use the redesigned route to simply bring pollution and traffic through the Township as they traverse from Pennsylvania to NJ. There is potential damage to the **Nationally Registered Historic Harbourton District** on Bear Tavern Road from this increased traffic pattern. Several of the historic buildings in this district are less than ten feet away from the road right of way.
3. Your response continues to focus primarily on the bridge, but continues to ignore the Potentially Eligible Historic Landscape which the bridge has protected for the last 129 years.
4. In regard to the preferred alternative 3B (of the 2004 Task Force, the Hopewell Twp. Committee, the 3000+ members of the Save the Victory Trail Coalition, and many other historic and environmental groups), I can understand your concerns about schools buses using the bridge since a 15 ton limit may be marginal for a loaded school bus or fire truck. However, in the **Keller Kirkpatrick Historic Bridge Analysis** you had produced in

Rani Browne Katz
52 Maddock Road
Titusville, NJ 08560

- 2009 (see page 51 of the Historic Bridge Alternative Analysis, paragraph 2) they state "As an option, higher load capacity is possible, as the two-span stringers could be selected to adequately carry a heavier load." A center pier could also be installed.
5. I also agree with your concern that Alternative 3B would require extensive modification in order to strengthen and widen the currently eligible historic bridge and may not comply with SOI standards. However, in granting **Potential Eligibility for the National Register** to the site on October 1, 2010, SHPO has determined that saving the historic site itself, which Dan Saunders stated is "profoundly historic", supersedes keeping the bridge SOI compliant. A good example of this is the **Califon bridge in Hunterdon County** where a similar Alternative 3B was performed. After the modifications were performed, ***the structure retains its individual eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C, and remains a contributing element of the Califon Historic District.*** This is our desire for the Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape, and the Jacobs Creek Bridge.
 6. Regarding your concern about the longevity of doing a rehab vs. new construction, the rehabbed Califon Bridge was completed in 1986 and still stands strong and viable today; 25 years later. Today the Engineering firm responsible for the Borough of Califon, NJ is Keller & Kirkpatrick, the same firm the County retained for the Historic Bridge Alternative Analysis.
 7. Thanks to your help, the roadway on both sides of the Jacobs Creek Bridge now has a 4-ton capacity road weight limit.
 8. Yes, it is true that the recent written opinion of SHPO indicated that the area **immediately** surrounding the bridge exhibits a "low potential for significant archeological resources", However, as we all know, Washington's army *did not* cross Jacob's Creek Bridge on their way to the first Battle of Trenton, but they did in fact cross Jacob's Creek a small distance to the west, where Ewing Creek meets Jacob's Creek. And, based on information contained on RFP documents available, this new construction will most surely dramatically, negatively impact the colonial road leading to the crossing point, and the crossing point itself. **Importantly, the archaeological disturbance mentioned, which has been restored, does not affect the historic character of the larger landscape.**

I would like to add, that at no time did I indicate that your staff was anything but accommodating to me when I visited the County Engineering Office. They were helpful and pleasant.

Yet the misunderstanding that prevails in that office as to the actual facts of the historic site surrounding the Jacobs Creek Bridge can be easily corrected and should most certainly not be repeated.

To avoid additional letters and the time of the persons copied on this correspondence, I am proposing a meeting to clarify the historical considerations in regard to this project and the meaning of certain correspondence and its effect on the National Register decision for the Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape. This discussion can result in the positive outcome which can be attained by knowledgeable consensus prior to additional steps being taken by the County.

I respectfully suggest that this meeting be attended by you, Aaron Watson, Director of Mercer County D.O.T., Greg Sandusky, County Engineer, Mayor Burd or Deputy Mayor Michael Markulec of Hopewell Township, David Blackwell, Beth Kerr and myself as the Applicants to the National

*Roni Browne Katz
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Titusville, NJ 08560*

Register, Mary Jane Cooper and Nancy Weinstein (impacted property owners adjacent to the proposed construction), and Asst. Commissioner Amy Cradic and Dan Saunders, Acting Administrator of the State Historic Preservation Office. Ms. Cradic, Dan Saunders and Deputy Mayor Markulec have all agreed to this proposed meeting. Please let me know your availability and that of your staff.

I am looking forward to the opportunity to discuss these issues and achieve a mutually productive and informative dialogue.

I will certainly, as you requested, forward your response and my answer to the persons copied.

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 Gallas, 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
Deputy Mayor Michael Markulec, Hopewell Township
Max Hayden, Chair, Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commissioner
Judith Peoples, Ewing Historical Society
Lee Farnham, Chair, Ewing Environmental Commission
Aaron Watson, Director, Mercer County D.O.T.
Greg Sandusky, Mercer County Engineer

HISTORIC BRIDGE ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

MERCER COUNTY BRIDGE No. 214.2
BEAR TAVERN ROAD OVER JACOB'S CREEK
TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL, MERCER COUNTY

APRIL 2009

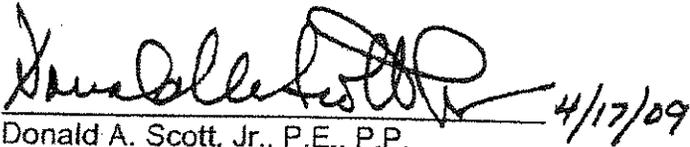
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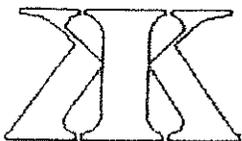
COUNTY OF MERCER
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE
Division of Engineering
McDade Administration Building
640 South Broad Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08650-0068

PREPARED BY:

KELLER & KIRKPATRICK
301 Gibraltar Drive, Suite 2A
Morris Plains, New Jersey 07950

 4/17/09
Jonathan C. Pera, P.E., P.P.
Senior Project Manager
New Jersey Professional Engineer License No. 44287

 4/17/09
Donald A. Scott, Jr., P.E., P.P.
Director of Structural Engineering
New Jersey Professional Engineer License No. 25890



Keller & Kirkpatrick

CONSULTING ENGINEERS SURVEYORS PLANNERS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Tel. (973) 377-8500

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E-Mail: kellkirk@kellkirk.com

301 Gibraltar Drive, Suite 2A

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website: www.kellkirk.com

Alternative 3B – Modified Rehabilitation (Plate Nos. 16 & 17)

~~Rehab Existing Bridge, Slice, Widen, Heighten (14 ft) and Provide New Structural Underpinning. (New 2-Span Bridge & Trusses as Facades)~~

(this alternative is the "preferred alternative" in Bear Tavern Bridge Task Force Recommendations, November 8, 2004)

Description

Under this alternative, the existing truss bridge would be removed and rehabilitated. A new two-span bridge (stringers and deck) would replace the structural element of the crossing. The rehabilitated trusses would then be remounted as refurbished, non-functioning trusses as a façade to the replacement bridge.

This alternative proposes to rehabilitate the existing bridge to H15 capacity loading, per AASHTO guidelines for bridges to remain in place. As an option, higher load capacity is possible, as the two-span stringers could be selected to adequately carry a heavier load.

The approach roadway would be reconstructed and widened to accommodate a 28' wide roadway. Bridge and approach roadway would have two 11' lanes with 3' shoulders.

Existing stone masonry abutments and wingwalls would be reconstructed and widened. A new center pier would be constructed to maintain a shallow member profile. The existing stone masonry retaining wall along the northern embankment of Bear Tavern Road west of the truss bridge would be repaired.

Impact on Historic Fabric of Bridge

The rehabilitated truss elements would only support their own dead weight. The non-functioning trusses would eliminate the historical use of the truss elements. This alternate would severely impact the historic fabric of the bridge and would not meet the *Secretary of the Interior Standards*.

Compatibility with Project Need (Other than Impact to Historic Fabric of Bridge)

<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternative 3B</i>	<i>Improvement</i>
Posted Weight Limit: 3 Tons	15 Tons	Yes, Standard
Roadway Width on Bridge: 17'4"	28'-0"	Yes.
Overhead clearance: 12'-6"	14'-0"	Yes
Posted Speed Limit: 15 MPH	25 MPH	Yes.
Traffic Flow: Stop Sign	Stop Sign	No Change

This alternative partially meets the project needs. The structural capacity and travel way width of the bridge would be improved to the standard for bridges to remain in place. The posted



COUNTY OF MERCER

McDADE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
640 SOUTH BROAD STREET
P.O. BOX 8068
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08650-8068

BRIAN M. HUGHES
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

TEL: (609) 989-6518
FAX: (609) 278-4819

Roni Browne Katz
52 Maddock Ave.
Titusville, NJ 08560

March 4, 2011

Dear Ms. Katz,

Thank you for your email dated Feb. 28, 2011 regarding the future of the Bear Tavern Road bridge over Jacobs Creek on County Route 579 in Hopewell Township.

As you are well aware, replacement of the bridge and realignment of the roadway has been under consideration for decades, certainly long before I have had the privilege of serving as County Executive. In fact, maps dated to 1966 show the acquisition of the right of way in the area surrounding the bridge, and over the more than 40 years since that acquisition, Hopewell Township has blossomed into a growing and prosperous community. As a result, the bridge and the roadway leading up to it have grown increasingly unable to safely support modern vehicles and the increased volume of traffic that goes hand in hand with a flourishing community. The replacement of the bridge is tied not to our corporate neighbors' growth or even its future in Mercer County; the replacement of the bridge is necessary to safely accommodate existing traffic, and with a keen eye toward the future.

Hopewell Township's growth did not happen overnight, and was not the product of any one entity. The County has no jurisdiction over Hopewell Valley Regional School District, but a school was constructed decades ago on Bear Tavern Road. Mercer County likewise has no jurisdiction over your town's zoning decisions; that is a function of municipal government. Hopewell Township decided the region in question could adequately accommodate corporate neighbors. It is Hopewell Township, not Mercer County, that endorsed construction of a new state-of-the art medical center in your town. It is Hopewell Township that has given site-plan approval to a new housing development. It is Hopewell Township, not Mercer County, which seeks to extend sewer service. As your County Executive it is my job to ensure that the concerns in my purview are addressed. And in this case, that issue is that a County road and bridge is safe for travel not just for the nearby residents but for the thousands who drive on Bear Tavern Road in your growing community.

You also asked why the County would move forward with design phase of the new bridge and road realignment while an application for historic designation is before the state. In a letter from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection dated Sept. 9, 2010, the Historic Preservation Office concluded, after its review of the Archaeological Survey performed by an independent consultant recommended to the County by State DEP, that our consultant's assessment was accurate, that the property in question had "low potential to contain significant archaeological resources", and that the area in question had already been subject to previous disturbance during installation of sewer lines. As a result of this determination, a decision was made to move forward with the design phase of the project. Please understand, however, moving ahead with the design phase entails consideration of all potential environmental impacts including the potential historic designation of the area. In essence, the design phase seeks to identify all of the constraints associated with the project including costs, available right of way, and wetlands impacts.

Additionally, you describe your preference for one (Alternative 3B) of the other 14 options that had been considered by the group of citizens, Hopewell officials, County officials and others who weighed the many options for the new bridge. Alternative 3B would maintain the existing roadway alignment but proposes to essentially split the structure down the center, widen it and strengthen the supporting members. This option was strongly considered as one of the alternatives in the Historic Bridge Alternatives Analysis Report. However, due to the original configuration of the structure, the extent of deterioration and addition of numerous repairs, rehabilitation would require the substantial, intricate strengthening and select component replacement of main and secondary members. Because of the level of strengthening that would be required, a rehabilitation effort on the bridge would significantly affect the original design and workmanship of the existing bridge and cause it to lose all historical significance. The required work on the original trusses also does not comply with the Secretary of the Interior Standards. In the Historic Bridge Alternative Analysis, to which you refer, the "Impact on Historic Fabric of Bridge" under Alternative 3B states: "The rehabilitated truss elements would only support their own dead weight. The non-functioning trusses would eliminate the historical use of truss elements. This alternative would severely impact the historic fabric of the bridge and would not meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards." Consequently, a rehabilitation option was not deemed viable.

Not only would Alternative 3B destroy the historic significance the bridge itself, the bridge would still be deemed "functionally obsolete" and "structurally deficient". In layman's terms, *Functionally obsolete* refers to bridges that do not have the lane widths, shoulder widths, or vertical clearances adequate to serve traffic demand or bridges that may not be able to handle occasional roadway flooding. *Structurally deficient* refers to bridges needing significant maintenance attention, rehabilitation, or replacement. Additionally, Alternative 3B would increase the maximum weight load of the bridge to only 15 tons, which is still not adequate to accommodate a loaded school bus or fire truck. Even if the County continued to pursue this option, it would only extend the life span of the bridge for a few years after which time other options would need to be considered.

A new structure would have a projected lifespan of approximately 75 to 100 years and would meet the standards mentioned above. At the turn of the 20th Century, Mercer County's

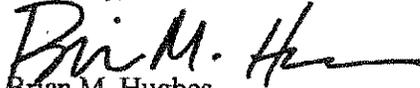
population was only 100,000 people. Today, we're nearly 365,000 residents strong. Making decisions in government often entails balancing many competing interests, and it is my responsibility to all the residents of Mercer County to weigh those interests. A new structure on an alignment that is safer and far more efficient for accommodating existing and future traffic, including travel by local residents and businesses and emergency response vehicles, and that offers school buses a more direct route to the Bear Tavern School balances the needs all our constituents. The County plans to either relocate the existing bridge to another area of the township for use as a pedestrian bridge in a park or to rehabilitate the bridge consistent with Secretary of the Interior Standards for use as a pedestrian bridge and scenic overlook. Either option will not only ensure the historical value of the existing bridge is retained, but allow it to be used and admired for many generations of Mercer County residents in the future.

As for the professionalism and courtesy of my staff, I am aware that a number of key personnel have responded to your letters and emails, and that you've spoken at great length with them via telephone. My staff has responded with the utmost professionalism and courtesy and will continue to do so. In the spirit of transparency, my staff has put together a comprehensive information package on this project, including all the steps leading to where we are today, and that information has been readily available on our website for several years.

Finally, you inquired as to why the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the design phase of the project was not made public. As you may understand, this project requires specific, intimate knowledge of not only structural engineering and bridge design but an understanding of the potential historic and environmental circumstances. For this reason, Mercer County issued the Request for Proposal (RFP) as a Professional Services contract to three qualified firms that have this knowledge and capability in these areas. While open, competitive RFPs are typically posted on the County website, Professional Service contracts are exempt from bidding under New Jersey statute 40A:11-5. Therefore, the County chose not to post the RFP for the design of Jacobs Creek Bridge, just as we would not post other non-competitive contracts that require highly specialized, professional skill sets.

I hope this information is helpful and again, I thank you for your correspondence.

Sincerely,



Brian M. Hughes
County Executive

*Rani Braune Katz
52 Maddock Road
Titusville, NJ 08560*

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

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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 effects 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.

*Roni Browne Katz
52 Maddock Road
Titusville, NJ 08560*

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

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Land Use Regulation Program

MEETING ATTENDANCE SHEET

Date: 8/24/10 Subject: JACOBS CREEK BRIDGE

Note: The guidance provided at a pre-application meeting is not binding upon the Department, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:7A-10.4, N.J.S.A. 58:16A-50 et seq. And N.J.S.A. 12:5-3. Therefore, the Department shall in no way commit itself to approval or rejection of the proposed project as a result of these discussions. By attending this meeting all acknowledge this standard.

Name	Title	Telephone #	Affiliation	E-Mail
1. DAN SAUNDERS	ACTING ADMIN	609 633-2397	NJ DEP HIST PRES	dan.saunders@dep.state.nj.us
2 MARK SOLOMON	ATTY	609-951-4131	PETTER HAMILTON	solomonma@petterham.com
3. Basit Muzaffar	Bridge Engineer	609-989-6641	MERCER COUNTY	bmuza@mercercounty.nj.gov
4 GREG SANBUSKY	COUNTY ENGINEER	609-989-6600	MERCER COUNTY	gsanbusky@mercercounty.nj.gov
5. Brick Lloyd	DIRECTOR STATE GOVT AFFAIRS	732-524-3726	Johnson	lloyd@its.nj.com
6. Todd Subacus	DIRECTOR, SITE SERVICES	609-730-2337	Johnson	tsubacus@its.nj.com
7. Lou Cattuna	Supervisor	609 777-0464	NJ DEP	lou.cattuna@dep.nj.gov
8 Rick Reilly	Manager	609-633-6563	NJ DEP-LUR	rick.reilly@dep.nj.gov
9				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				

8/24/2010.

Meeting with NTDEP & Jensen Pharma ~~at~~
#214.2 Bear Tavern Road bridge @ 501 East State Street
Nacobs Creek Bridge

NTDEP } Don Sanders
Law Cottua
Rick Reily

Intro by lawyer.

- GS went over the history. from 1966 to present (closing)
- He went over the prepared alternate SA/SB-3.
- mentioned that he attended 3/4 public meetings
- ~~met~~ met w/ township.
- ~~Phase~~ Phase 1A/1B have been done
- wetland and Flood ^{hazard} Permit

less than 1/4 acres than it is G.P.

if more than 1/4 acres " " " Individual permit

- J&J endorsed the re-alignment because it works ^{with} their approved Master plan which is within Hopewell ^{Corp.}
- Sanders said the NTDEP Commissioner wants the access to Jensen from RT. 29. He is in favor of 3B option.
- ~~Jensen~~ ^{John} (Jansen) and Rick Lloyd (Jensen) have made it very clear that they are looking for certainty as opposed to RT 29 uncertainty. This will determine whether Jansen develops this site or moves from NJ. The economic loss would be NJ loss.

- Mark mentioned that they have neither the Row nor the ? to make the 29 happen.
- John mentioned that the Cost would be very high if 29 option is used.

* - *Patricia Jameson* 1/10/91
1989

VAN CLEEF ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES

Job No. 7804-8906

Date 10-31-89

Sheet No. 1 of

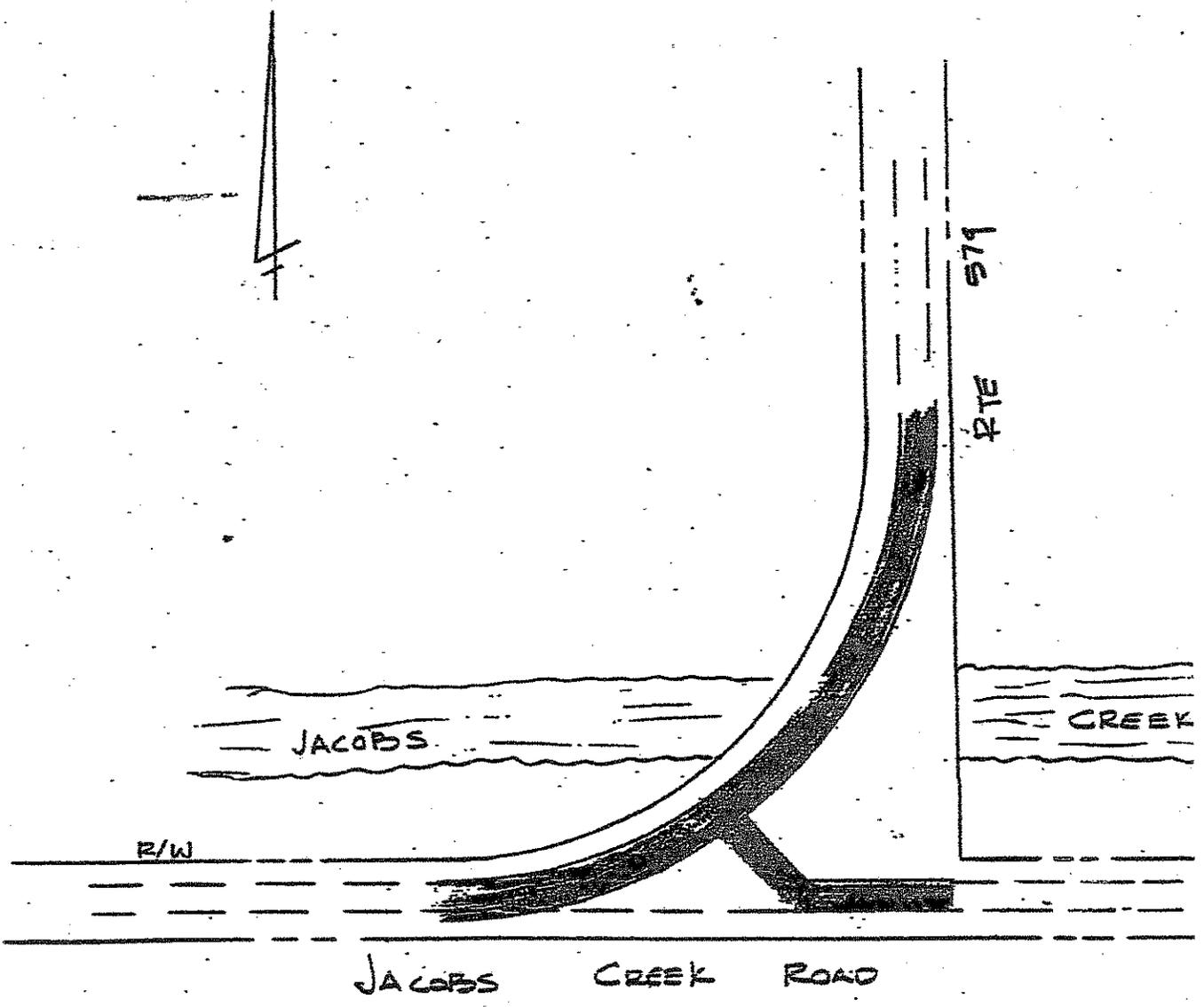
Computed by

Checked by

DESIGN CALCULATIONS

SUBJECT BRIDGE 214.2
ALTERNATIVE # 2

N. J.
30888
009145
Morris Plains, NJ
763-96-9500
FAX N.



* Same as alternative 5 III B

**Crossroads of the American Revolution Association, PO Box 1364, Princeton, NJ 08542
and
Preservation New Jersey, 310 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08618**

January 20, 2011

The Honorable Brian Hughes
County Executive, Mercer County
Mercer County Administration Building
PO Box 8068
Trenton, NJ 08650

Dear Brian:

We are writing to ask that Mercer County pursue a bridge reconstruction at Jacobs Creek and Bear Tavern Road that will create minimal disturbance to the historically significant rural landscape of this region.

The site of the Bear Tavern Road Bridge across Jacob's Creek in Hopewell Township is the only major stream crossing made by Washington's army on the way to the first Battle of Trenton, and except for the current 1880s bridge itself and Jacobs Creek Road, the site topography and features are essentially undisturbed by the passage of 233 years. As noted in Lieutenant Elisha Bostwick's Memoirs and referenced in David Hackett Fischer's *Washington's Crossing*, the Continental Army's march, down Bear Tavern Road towards Trenton, brought them to a steep and treacherous wooded slope leading down to Jacobs Creek. "... ropes had to be brought out, and trees used as mooring posts for mechanical advantage, so that the guns could be lowered slowly to the bottom of the ravine... As the soldiers slowly advanced down the slope to Jacobs Creek and up the other side..."

A recent opinion from the Historic Preservation Office of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Natural & Historic Resources (NJ SHPO), states: "There is a potentially eligible cultural landscape that constitutes a historic district in the area...in the case of Jacobs Creek Crossing, there are two geographically overlapping and historically intertwined entities: ... The second entity is the general north/south route of Bear Tavern Road (in the 18th century the River Road). Bear Tavern Road was an important 18th and 19th century road. The road is of course the route of Washington's march to Trenton..." Indeed, the routes that Washington and the Continental Army took from Washington Crossing to Trenton for two battles were designated in June 1999 by joint resolution of the New Jersey legislature as the "Washington Victory Trail."

With regard to the surrounding landscape, you certainly know that current discussion, including the above mentioned opinion from the NJ SHPO, has elevated and confirmed this landscape's historical significance and integrity. Indeed, the value of the historic importance was marked in the early 20th century by a cast bronze historic marker affixed to a large boulder alongside Bear Tavern Road, just north of the bridge crossing, with an account of the passage of Washington's army through the valley and across Jacobs Creek en route to the Battle of Trenton.

We urge you to preserve this evocative and nationally significant landscape with as little disturbance as possible. In line with the National Heritage Area's mission, protecting its historic character would

enable current and future generations a unique opportunity to fully appreciate the role of Jacobs Creek and Hopewell Township during the Revolutionary War.

Sincerely yours,



Cate Litvack
Crossroads of the American Revolution Association



Ron Emrich
Preservation New Jersey

cc:

Mercer County Board of Freeholders

Pasquale "Pat" Colavita, Jr.

Dan Benson

Ann Cannon

Anthony Carabelli

John Cimino

Andrew Koontz

Lucy Walter

County Engineer Greg Sandusky

Hopewell Township Committee

Mayor James Burd

Michael Markulek

Kimberly Johnson

John Murphy

Vanessa Sandom

Administrator/Engineer Paul Pogorzelski, Hopewell Township

Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commission

Representative Rush Holt

Senator Shirley Turner

Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman

Assemblyman Reed Gusciora

Commissioner Robert Martin, NJDEP

Deputy Commissioner Irene Kropp, NJDEP

Assistant Commissioner Amy Cradic, NJDEP

Acting Administrator Dan Saunders, HPO

David Blackwell

Elisabeth Kerr

Roni Katz

To the Freeholders of Mercer County

This letter is about Jacob's Creek, and the plans for new bridge and road construction at that site. Our purpose is not to oppose bridge and highway improvements, which clearly are needed. We are writing as historians, to urge that as the project goes forward, the history which happened here should be treated with respect. The site's unique ecology, which is linked to its history, might also receive attention. The new construction project might be an opportunity to make this site more accessible to people who have an interest in these things.

To that end, we offer a thought as to how that might be done. We suggest the inclusion of a permanent walking trail, perhaps with a path beside it for cyclists, runners and riders to share. As near as possible, it could follow the route of George Washington's army across Jacob's Creek.

On that event, we have five independent eyewitness accounts, all of which indicate that Washington and both divisions of his army marched together from McConkey's Ferry to Bear Tavern and on to Birmingham (now West Trenton) on the night of December 25-26, 1776. These sources tell us explicitly that Washington divided the two divisions of the army at Birmingham, not before--and no account contradicts them. This evidence tells us that they crossed Jacob's Creek together, and that Washington was with them. We also have new information that they crossed the Creek over a ford near the existing bridge. Its location has now been identified.

The ravine of Jacob's Creek and its tributary presented a major terrain obstacle to the army, because they were marching with 18 artillery pieces. Each gun weighed between 1500 and 2000 pounds, plus ammunition in side boxes and probably farm carts. George Washington and Henry Knox used twice the ratio of guns to infantry as did British or Hessian troops. The guns were critically important at Trenton and Princeton. They gave American troops a vital advantage over their highly trained opponents.

The entire march was difficult that night, but no part of it was more difficult than Jacob's Creek. There the stream crossing was 100 feet below the elevation of the Bear Creek Road. The horses had to be unharnessed and the guns lowered by hand and hoisted again by brute strength on the other side. All this was done in a heavy storm of snow, sleet, and freezing rain. Some of the men had been marching for two weeks from the northern frontier. Many were ill and without outer coats or shoes, on a night so cold that some of them froze to death by the road.

The ordeal of these men that night, and the leadership of George Washington, who was mentioned in most of their accounts, made possible the campaign of Trenton and Princeton. Historians believe that these events delivered the Revolutionary cause from the brink of defeat.

When we walked the route, the drama of these events came home to us as we crossed the ravine at Jacob's Creek--more so there than in any other part of the march. Others who walk this ground feel the same way. Trails have been organized along other parts of Washington's march, but to follow the route across Jacob's Creek has been difficult and dangerous on existing roads before the bridge

was closed.

The proposed project for the improvement of roads and the bridge could create an opportunity to make the heritage of this historic site more accessible. It might be done by a modest addition to the building program--a multipurpose historical and ecological trail and path that could run down into the ravine, across the newly rediscovered ford, and up again. All this would make the area accessible for historical reenactors and professional soldiers on their staff rides. Every year at West Point all members of the senior class study this campaign in their capstone course on combat command. Families could teach their children what happened here. Visitors with other interests could study the ecology of the ravine, and use the trail for recreational purposes. For very little additional cost the trail could be combined with new technology for interpretation along the way at digital stations which are accessible by cell phones or other hand-held devices.

To pay for the trail, perhaps the children of New Jersey might be invited to create drawings and stories of the event, and contribute pennies to its cost, so that they might develop a sense of ownership about its history. Perhaps the Janssen Pharmaceutical Corporation, and Johnson and Johnson would be willing to contribute a few of their pennies as well, and act as good corporate citizens as they often do. Then all of us could join together behind the leadership of County Executive Brian Hughes in what George Washington called the Common Cause.

David Hackett Fischer

University Professor and Warren Professor of History

Brandeis University

James M. McPherson

George Henry Davis '86 Professor of American History Emeritus

Princeton University



State of New Jersey

MAIL CODE 501-04B

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

P.O. Box 420

Trenton, NJ 08625-0420

TEL. (609) 984-0176 FAX (609) 984-0578

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

BOB MARTIN
Commissioner

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

October 1, 2010

09-1991-3, -4

HPO-J2010-001

Elisabeth Kerr, Roni Katz, and David Blackwell
1139 Bear Tavern Road
Titusville, NJ 08560

Dear Ms. Kerr, Ms. Katz, and Mr. Blackwell:

Thank you for your efforts in preparing the preliminary application for the Jacobs Creek Crossing Rural Historic Landscape. The Historic Preservation Office has carefully reviewed the preliminary application. In the course of our review, we have consulted with the staff of the National Register of Historic Places Section of the National Park Service, and discussed the area with staff of the American Battlefield Protection Program. As a further effort, HPO staff assisted in a successful effort to find some early Mercer County Freeholder's Minutes which were thought to be lost.

As you noted in your submission, the book Hopewell, A Historical Geography by Richard W. Hunter & Richard L. Porter, 1990, identified a Burroughs Rural Historic District just north of Jacobs Creek, focusing on the Burroughs Family farms. The *Phase 1A Archaeological Study, Bear Tavern Road Bridge over Jacobs Creek, Hopewell Township, Mercer County, New Jersey* prepared by John Milner Associates, Inc. January 2010 also concluded the Jacobs Creek Bridge project area is "eligible for the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places as both a significant historic road corridor and as a cultural landscape." Based on the information available to date, including your submission, I concur that the district you propose is potentially eligible for the New Jersey and National Registers. I have therefore enclosed a National Register Nomination Form for your use.

While it has been clear for some time that there is a potentially eligible cultural landscape that constitutes a historic district in the area, it is not easy to identify the specific boundaries and extent of that historic district. To be eligible as a district, a property must be a distinguishable entity. In the case of Jacobs Creek Crossing, there are two

geographically overlapping and historically intertwined entities: The first is the valley formed by the northeast to southwest flow of Jacobs Creek to the Delaware River, a valley shaped in the 18th century by the damming of ponds and creation of raceways, and in the 19th century by the construction of a road to the mill, followed by the construction of the Mercer and Somerset Railroad, and concluding with the conversion of the railbed into a roadbed. The second entity is the generally north/south route of Bear Tavern Road (in the 18th century the River Road). Bear Tavern Road was an important 18th- and 19th-century road. The road is of course the route of Washington's march to Trenton, and presumably also a route of supply during the Revolutionary War.

The area of intersection of these two entities is the descent of the road from both north and south down through the valley to the bridge crossing Jacobs Creek. It is now clear from historical evidence that the earlier natural ford of the Creek was located west of the current bridge location. It was the construction of the current bridge in 1882, and the seemingly simultaneous conversion of the railroad bed into a roadway that yielded the current road configuration.

I do have some concerns about boundaries for the proposed district. First, most of the houses along Jacobs Creek Road west of Bear Tavern Road postdate any reasonable period of significance for the District. This area of the proposed district may have to include only the creek bed, with the archaeological mill features as the contributing elements. At the north end of the proposed district along Bear Tavern Road, the proposed 500 foot boundary seems arbitrary; the reason for the exclusion of houses that date to the 18th and 19th century period of significance of the district is unclear. The boundary in this area must be carefully thought through and justified. Finally, I suggest that you consider using the Jeremiah Woolsey House on Pennington-Washington Crossing Road, which is individually listed, as the eastern terminus of the proposed district. The southern boundary makes sense in principal, but is not yet clearly mapped.

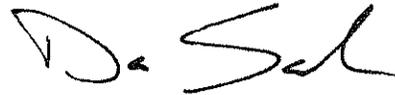
New Jersey and National Register Nominations must be adequately documented and technically and professionally correct and sufficient. The requirements for documentation to support a nomination are quite specific. As the proposed district is a rural historic landscape, the nomination will need to specifically address the eleven characteristics of rural historic landscapes established in the National Register Bulletin, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes*.

Historic district nominations generally take a year or more from start to finish. Complicated nominations, and this is certainly one, often take substantially longer. Our experience is that nominations prepared by experienced cultural resource professionals move more quickly. Virtually every nomination received by the office is returned to the submitter for revision, often for substantial revision, before the nomination meets the requirements for listing. Once the Department has a fully documented and correct nomination, we must allow Hopewell Township, as a Certified Local Government, 60 days to review the nomination. If Hopewell Township's historic preservation commission and its chief elected local official do not object to listing the district, the nomination will be made available for public review for a period of 60 days. All owners of property within

the proposed district will need to be notified of the nomination at that time. After the public notice is complete, the nomination will be presented to the New Jersey State Review Board at an open public meeting for the Board's review and recommendation to the Department. If the State Review Board recommends approval of the nomination, the Department will then make a final decision on the nomination.

Thank you for your efforts to preserve New Jersey's historic resources. If you have any questions, please contact me at 609-633-2397 or dan.saunders@dep.state.nj.us

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Saunders". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Daniel D. Saunders
Acting Administrator

C: Mayor Michael Markulec
Hopewell Township Historic Preservation Commission
County Executive Brian Hughes
County Engineer Greg Sandusky

Jacobs Creek Crossing and the Route from The River Crossing to "Birmingham"

Welcome,

I'd like to introduce you to an area of Hopewell and Ewing Townships where Washington's Army struggled mightily to complete its march over the night of December 25th and 26th, 1776, on its way to the first Battle of Trenton, a battle which saved the desperate cause of Patriotism, the American Army, indeed, the War for Independence. After the Crossing of the Delaware River through flowing ice and under a sleeting sky, the Army soon encountered the next most difficult location of that fateful journey. Pulitzer price winner David Hackett Fischer, in his *Washington's Crossing* identified the Jacobs Creek ravine as the place recalled by Elisha Bostwick in his Memoirs.

'Then they came to a big stream called Jacobs Creek. Its tumbling waters had cut a deep ravine directly across their path. The road fell away in a steep decline, down the side of the ravine toward a rocky creek bed a hundred feet below. The water was high and swift that night as it flowed toward the Delaware River. In a storm of snow and sleet and hail, the steep descent was difficult for marching men, and impossible for limbered guns and harnessed horses.

Lieutenant Elisha Bostwick remembered that the column halted, and "our horses were then unharnessed & the artillery prepared." That arduous process, which he (Bostwick) summarized in a few words, consumed precious time. The artillery's long drag ropes had to be brought out, and trees used as mooring posts for a mechanical advantage, so the guns could be lowered slowly to the bottom of the ravine. On the other side of the creek, the guns had to be hauled up again by teams of men who were struggling to keep their own balance. Slowly the column inched its way down the slope to Jacob's Creek and up the other side, only to meet another deep ravine. It was a flooded tributary of Jacob's Creek, smaller but very steep.'

Before committing this conclusion to print, Fischer walked the march route to Trenton with the well-respected Princeton University history professor, James McPherson. Together they concluded Jacobs Creek was the location described for the lowering of the cannon, as well as a feat of horsemanship by General Washington, since no other comparable physical feature exists on the route of the march.

But let's go back to the crossing at the river. Imagine the scene. William S. Stryker gave us the ingredients for the picture in 1898. As the troops crossed the river they had to stay in the order of march. Seven brigades, each with two local guides, led by a company of artillerymen whose sole purpose was to rush the Hessian cannons and disable or capture

them. This whole column would have been about a third to half a mile long, some troops standing in the frigid cold for up to eight hours while the crossing was completed on the present Washington's Crossing Road, Rt. 546, which had been opened just 10 years before to connect Johnson's Ferry to the River Road, now known as Bear Tavern Road. Around the column was a perimeter of additional troops who had been directed to detain anyone out wandering in the night who might give alarm to the Hessians at Trenton.

According to Stryker, the 18 cannons were arranged strategically, four at the head of the first division, commanded by Sullivan, three at the middle of that division, and two at its rear, in front of Greene's Division. The other nine were arranged the same way in Greene's Division. The two divisions would eventually split, to approach Trenton on different roads. The night was black, the snow and sleet fell by turns, and the men waited, with the frozen ground pushing its bone numbing cold into them through their ill shod feet.

Finally the order to march was given, and the 2400 men, marching 8 abreast by orders, ascended the long hill to the River Road, near Abraham Anderson's house. Here the full army turned south on the River Road. Much error has been introduced into the historical record on this point. One discredited work, *Diary of an Officer on Washington's Staff*, authored anonymously in the 19th century, is the sole source for the idea that the Bear Tavern then existed here, and that Greene's portion of the army continued eastward toward Pennington. Erskine's map shows that Washington's Crossing Road, Rt. 546, did not then extend toward Pennington, and the official road return for the extension shows the road was first opened in 1788, 12 years later. The nine acres whereon the State Park Headquarters, which is the later Bear Tavern building was first separated in 1806, and purchased by John Hart for use as a tavern in 1813. Only one of his tavern applications, that of 1828, mentions the name "Bear Tavern". The 1788 Road Return mentions the Mershon Tavern further north on the River Road, but it does not mention a tavern at the intersection, and the 1779 Erskine map also shows the Mershon tavern slightly to the north, but does not show any building on the corner where the Bear Tavern would later be.

Washington himself, known to be with Greene's division, can be found further to the south, at Benjamin Moore's house on River Road, some hours later. According to Moore's great granddaughter, Mrs. Sarah Chambers, the General remained on his horse while accepting a cake and drink from the family. This event was published in Raum's *History of Trenton*. The Erskine map shows this house to be in the vicinity of Mercer County airport. Fischer cites this house as a tavern, and places it in the village

Meanwhile, private John Greenwood, a soldier in Sullivan's division grew impatient with the starting and stopping of the Army.

"we began an apparently circuitous march, not advancing faster than a child ten years old could walk, and stopping frequently, though for what purpose I know not."

Greenwood was doubtless responding to the stoppages resulting from lowering the cannons down the Jacobs Creek ravine on the old River Road. Fischer cites a 100' fall to the Creek, and while the final slope is about 50', the actual drop from the high point of the road, somewhat north of the ravine, is indeed 100'. The cannons, on carts pulled by horses, would have begun to slide on the icy road long before the final slope into the ravine. The torches fixed to the cannon and ammunition carts were the only illumination, lighting the road side and forest trees with a ghostly dancing light, across which the biting sleet could be seen. For a half mile descending into the ravine, these one ton loads would have been tied off to tree after tree and carefully handled down the icy slope. The cannons were truly the difference in the battle to come. Richard Ketcham, author of several works describing battles of the Revolutionary War, speculated in his *Winter Soldiers*, based on some research, that some of these cannons were the very same brought overland from Ticonderoga to Boston, exactly a year before. Again Henry Knox was in charge, and again the artillerymen were successful in rigging the cannons through obstacles.

The road from Maidenhead or Lawrenceville to Howells Ferry, now Upper Ferry Road, was built well before the Revolution, and its intersection with the old River Road gave impetus to the formation of the village of Birmingham. At this point the army separated, as described by Col. James Wilkinson, who was there. In his *Memoirs of My Own Times* of 1811 he gave us a map showing the different routes taken by the two divisions of the army.

Bostwick also mentions a feat of horsemanship by General Washington, that he observed on a slope that again may have taken place in the Jacobs Creek ravine, there being no other similar topography on Washington's route to Trenton. As depicted by Fischer:

'George Washington rode up and down the column, urging his men forward. Suddenly the General's horse slipped and started to fall on a steep and icy slope. "While Passing a Slanting Slippery bank" Lieutenant Bostwick remembered, "his excellency's horse's hind feet both slip'd from under him,"Bostwick wrote that the general "seized his horses Mane, and the horse recovered." '

About three hours after the ordeal in the Jacobs Creek ravine, all 18 cannons having survived, shot sent down King and Queen Streets in Trenton, and across from the Calhoun Street area, prevented the Hessians from forming their ranks, and thereby forced their surrender. The Battle of Trenton might have been lost in the Jacobs Creek ravine.

Three people, acting privately, including myself, and Elisabeth Kerr and Roni Katz, both of Hopewell Township, submitted an application for eligibility of the Jacobs Creek ravine and a portion of Bear Tavern Road, called The Jacobs Creek Crossing Historic Landscape, to the State Historic Preservation Office. We received a ruling of "potential eligibility" on October 1st. This is consistent with the finding of Mercer County's professional survey of the area, by John Milner Associates, which stated that the area was "recommended eligible for the New Jersey Register" as a cultural landscape.

The concept of an historic or cultural landscape includes physical and cultural artifacts, such as the road itself, the cut in the face of the north side of the ravine which determined where the ancient path and colonial road had to run, and where the road still is today. Also the knob of land directly across from the landing of the road on the north bank of the creek, which forced the road to turn westward toward the river. Also the joining of Ewing Creek with Jacobs Creek, which determined where the ancient and colonial ford would be, prior to the first bridge of the 1790's. The early bridge was replaced almost a century later in 1882 by the present Iron Truss bridge, which connected to a man-made shelf that just previously had carried the Mercer & Somerset railroad of the preceding decade. The 1882 bridge is one of six remaining in the state, and has been determined eligible for the State register.

Despite the beauty of this place; despite the way the iron truss bridge allows the sweep of the ravine to be easily perceived; despite the way this little bank and the colonial ford, remain to portray the struggle of that night in 1776, despite the ruling of the State Historic Preservation Office for eligibility; despite the agreement of the County's consultant; despite the results of the 1994 Community task force recommendation for alteration and retention of the bridge, and the County's participation in that process, and despite Hopewell Township's policy to rehabilitate the bridge, Mercer County intends to remove this bridge, and replace it with a massive concrete bridge on a curve structure that will obliterate the place. And all this when the D&R Canal Commission's director as offered the possibility of a traffic improvement elsewhere that will remove the fundamental reason for the County's project.

A year ago, over 1,000 signatures were acquired against the County project. At present, some 60 residents of both Ewing and Hopewell Townships in the vicinity of the proposed Jacobs Creek Crossing Historic District have donated funds for the consultant necessary to develop the final nomination that will perhaps preserve this historic place. Meanwhile Mercer County is about to put out an RFP for the design of its bridge concept, and proceed as if the historic significance of this place did not exist.

We ask that all people with interest in local history, preservation, and the events surrounding the Battles of Trenton and Princeton, and indeed the founding of our country to publicly call for the preservation of significant places, and for the preservation of the Jacobs Creek Crossing Historic District where the American Cause was carried forward to the birth of our nation.

David Blackwell
Pennington NJ
blackwellsisland@aol.com

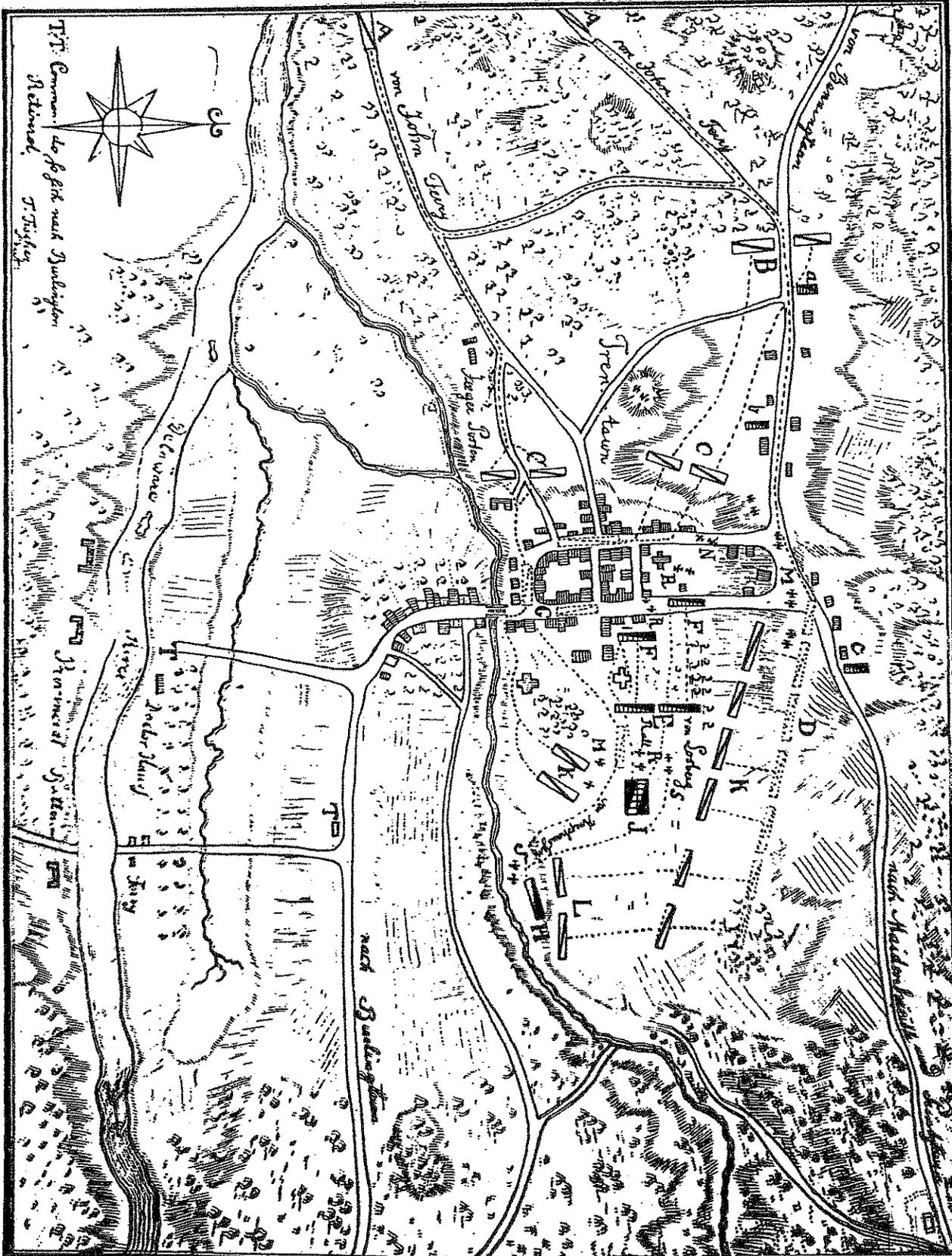
MAP
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LIEUTENANT FISCHER'S MAP

LIEUTENANT FISCHER'S MAP

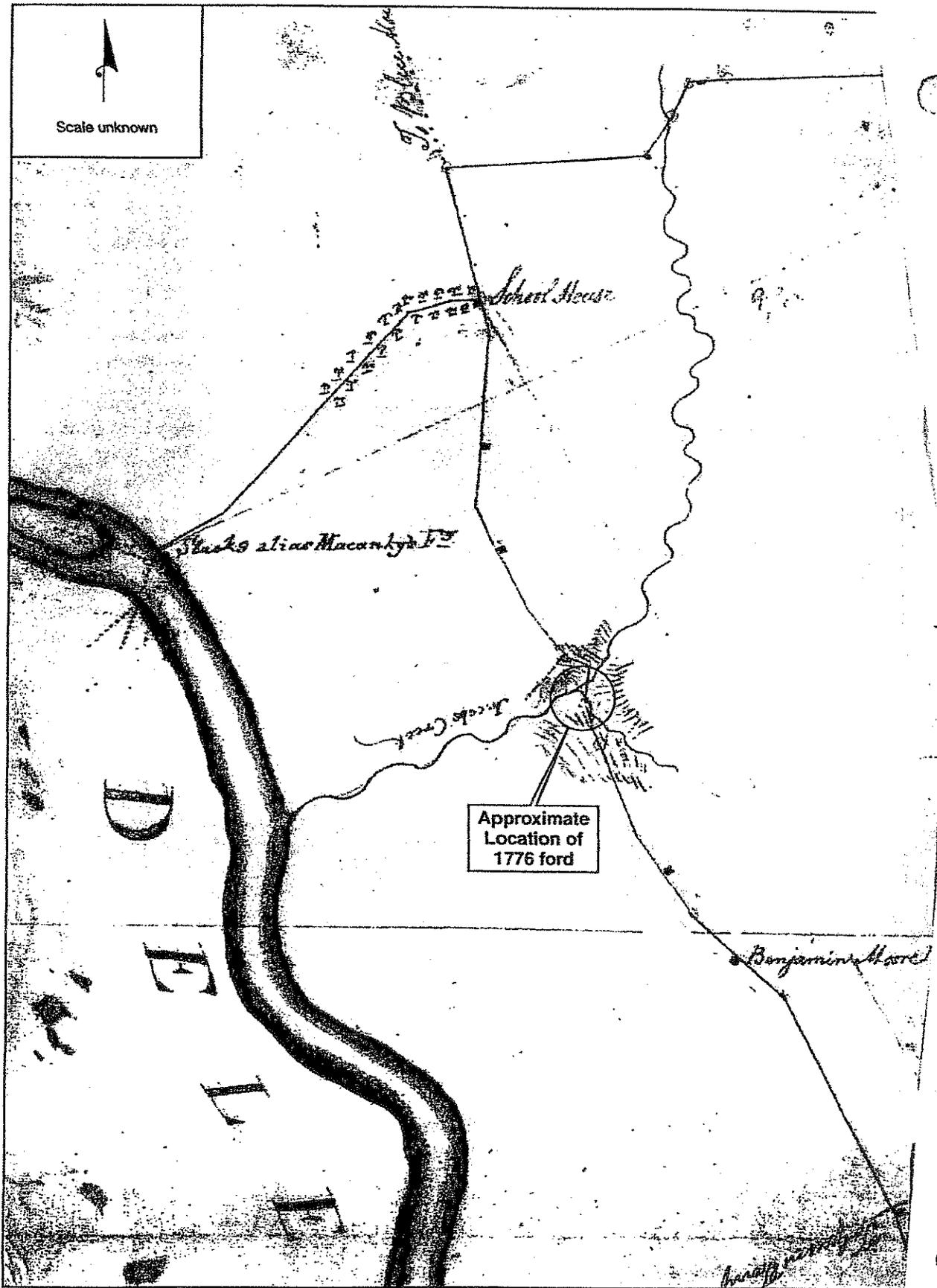


Figure 3. River Road, 1779 (Erskine 1779).



LOOKING BACK AT THE JACOBS CREEK BRIDGE FROM
"FORDING POINT" (APPROX 400 FT).