



TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

MERCER COUNTY

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May 19, 2011

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

Dear Executive Hughes:

Let me start by saying that I and my colleagues on the Hopewell Township Committee appreciate your efforts to date to work with us and the residents of Hopewell Township in developing a rehabilitation plan for the Jacobs Creek Bridge that balances traffic safety concerns and historic integrity of the Jacob Creek Bridge area. With those mutual goals in mind, the Township Committee has continued to explore viable options.

In furtherance of our discussions concerning the possibility of Hopewell Township's acceptance of ownership of the bridge over Jacobs Creek and the portion of County Route 579 between the bridge and County Route 546 and in response to growing public concern over the possible loss of this historic structure, Hopewell Township would like to open a discussion regarding a new alternative that came up at the May 9, 2011 Township Committee meeting. This new alternative would involve a rerouting of County Route 579 which would enable the abandonment of the bridge in place until such time as the appropriate restoration could be funded.

Under this alternative, the Township would take control of the Bear Tavern Bridge and take control of Bear Tavern Road (County Route 579) from its intersection with Jacobs Creek Road to its intersection with County Route 546. The County would take control of Jacobs Creek Road from its intersection with Bear Tavern Road to its intersection with County Route 546. This would allow the Township to either take the Bear Tavern Bridge out of commission or hold it in its unrepaired state until funding could be found to rehabilitate it. Mercer County would keep its road network intact by assigning Route 579 to Jacobs Creek Road and that portion of Route 546 between its intersections with Jacobs Creek Road and Bear Tavern Road.

This rerouting would require an expansion of the bridge presently under design at the intersection of Jacobs Creek Road and Route 546 to provide for enhanced right turn

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movements for eastbound traffic, however, this new routing would avoid the need for the significant realignment presently proposed by the County at the existing bridge location. This new routing would also provide for greater municipal control over the roadway at the Bear Tavern School because the traffic volumes would be greatly reduced. It is anticipated that Janssen would construct a new driveway to Route 29 which would further reduce traffic volumes in the vicinity of the Bear Tavern School.

This concept is a hybrid that has not previously been discussed. We acknowledge that you have previously stated that Hopewell Township's opportunity to discuss a "takeover" of the bridge and roadway has expired; however, we feel this new idea merits at least some consideration. We request the opportunity to discuss this concept with you at your earliest convenience.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Burd".

James Burd, Mayor

C: Hopewell Township Committee