

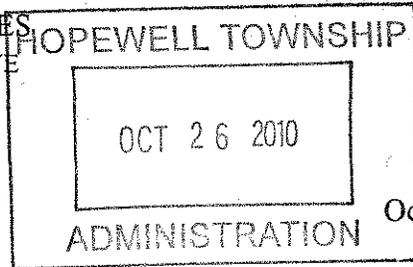


# COUNTY OF MERCER

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

C. Committee  
Administrator/eng.  
website

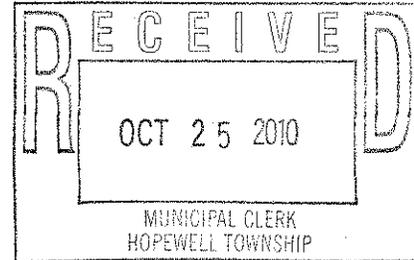
BRIAN M. HUGHES  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



October 21, 2010

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

The Honorable Michael Markulec, Mayor  
Hopewell Township  
201 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road  
Titusville, NJ 08560



Dear Mayor Markulec:

I have been informed via an email from your Municipal Engineer that your schedule does not permit you to meet with me to discuss the future of Jacobs Creek Bridge, as I requested in a letter to you dated Oct. 18, 2010. Additionally, I received your letter, also dated Oct. 18, 2010, requesting that Mercer County give Hopewell Township an additional year to consider Mercer County's offer to have Hopewell Township assume ownership of the bridge and a portion of County Route 579.

You state you are seeking to further delay a decision on this project so that you can get guidance from the State Department of Environmental Protection and from your township engineer. While I appreciate your concerns relative to postponing your decision, Mercer County has a responsibility to provide a safe passageway for the motoring public, and granting Hopewell Township another year to mull over its options is unrealistic. As your administration studies the capital maintenance issues involved in taking ownership of the bridge, I'm sure you will discover what Mercer County has known all along. Shoring the bridge to make it safe for a 30,000 pound fire apparatus is indeed an expensive endeavor.

Mercer County has owned the right-of-way since 1966 and has been studying this issue in earnest since 2004. From the start we have collaborated and cooperated with all interested parties - NJDEP, the state Office of Historic Preservation, Hopewell Township, Hopewell Township Historic Commission, Hopewell Township Police, residents and others. Consultation was not required for us to begin this project, but we did so in the spirit of cooperation, and all parties endorsed Alternative 5A/5B-Modified 3.

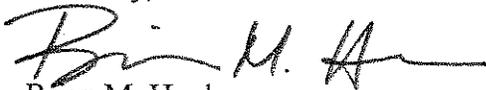
My administration has devoted six years of study to this necessary project and has made numerous concessions, and we cannot allow the shifting political winds to control the outcome. Mercer County's position has been consistent and based on the needs of all our citizens. We cannot afford to wait another year for replacement of this structure.

In response to your questions:

1. The funding sources for the Jacobs Creek Project are a combination of Annual Transportation Program (ATP) money and bridge bond money administered by the NJDOT.
2. Yes, these funding sources include relocation of Jacobs Creek Bridge to Alliger Park, as was adopted by the resolution from Hopewell, 09-107, dated March 9, 2009. That resolution stated the option (3B) would "greatly compromise the historic King Truss Bridge." A letter dated May 15, 2009 from the state Historic Preservation Office concurs, stating removal of the bridge from its location would constitute an adverse effect but the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) concurs with the submitted Alternative Analysis report, and that the selection of Alternative 5A/5B-Modified 3 (new Single Span/relocate truss) will minimize adverse effects to identified historic properties.
3. It is Mercer County's understanding that the purpose of bridge replacement and supporting dollars is to remove bridges from the Functionally Obsolete/Structurally Deficient list.
4. No.
5. No. If the township takes jurisdiction, the township assumes all costs, liabilities and jurisdictional responsibility.

It is unfortunate that you are unable to meet with me this week or next on what I believe is a critical issue. The township's unwillingness to move forward is not a mere inconvenience to the people who live and work in that area. It has increased traffic on roads not meant to handle hundreds of vehicles daily and has created a financial hardship for businesses along the route. You have stated your timetable, the DEP has outlined its own timetable, and Mercer County has its own timetable, and for Mercer County, the time for action is now. I respectfully ask you to reconsider your response and I invite you to include any members of your team to attend.

Sincerely,



Brian M. Hughes  
County Executive

- C. Aaron T. Watson, Director, Mercer County Department of Transportation  
Greg Sandusky, County Engineer