

**TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL
MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

R E S O L U T I O N #24-137

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
HOPEWELL, MERCER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, EXPRESSING CONCERN
OVER THE POTENTIAL REPLACEMENT OF THE WASHINGTON CROSSING
BRIDGE**

WHEREAS, the current Washington Crossing Toll Supported Bridge, more commonly known as the Washington Crossing Bridge, was opened to traffic in 1905; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Crossing Bridge connects Hopewell Township, New Jersey, and Upper Makefield Township, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, on February 28, 2024, the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) issued a news release entitled, "Commission Begins Process of Setting Stage for Possible Future Replacement of 119-Year-Old Washington Crossing Bridge;" and

WHEREAS, the news release stated that the DRJTBC "recently posted a request for proposals (RFP) to procure a consulting team that would conduct a multi-year environmental review process identifying and examining numerous issues and hurdles before a new bridge could be designed and built;" and

WHEREAS, the news release stated that "The Commission has reached the point where it is considering replacing the bridge;" and

WHEREAS, the news release stated that "Cultural and historic stakeholder goals would include minimizing historical impacts wherever possible and implementing context-sensitive design solutions. Community goals include maintaining the charming small town and historical environment of the surrounding areas;" and

WHEREAS, the news release stated that "According to the RFP, the goal of the environmental review process would be to obtain a [Finding of No Significant Impact] within 30 months (2 1/2 years) after the consulting team is brought on board and given direction to proceed. A 30-month time frame conceivably would take until 2027 before the Commission would initiate permit acquisition, design, etc., for a proposed replacement bridge;" and

WHEREAS, the news release stated that "In addition to analyzing a range of replacement alternatives, the [National Environmental Policy Act] process is to also examine a No-Build alternative (the option of not replacing the bridge;)" and

WHEREAS, any changes to the current Washington Crossing Bridge would likely have a substantial, significant, and permanent impact to Hopewell Township and its residents, including but not limited to increased traffic on Washington Crossing-Pennington Road (State Route 546), disruption to the residents of the Titusville area of Hopewell Township, and harm to the area surrounding Washington Crossing State Park; and

WHEREAS, on February 28, 2024, the same day she received the news release by email from the DRJTBC, Hopewell Township Mayor Courtney Peters-Manning contacted the Director of Community Affairs of the DRJTBC, stating as follows: "This project will have an enormous impact on our community in Hopewell Township, so I appreciate you keeping me informed. The bridge, even with its severe limitations as outlined in this press release, currently is used often by vehicles looking to avoid the toll on I-295. I am concerned that a wider and safer span, while very much welcomed in many regards, would create a traffic nightmare on Route 29 in Hopewell Township and beyond. Will there be further opportunities for our input and involvement as the project moves forward?;" and

WHEREAS, on February 28, 2024, the Director of Community Affairs of the DRJTBC resounded to Mayor Peters-Manning, stating, "Yes, there will absolutely be open house information sessions and public comment periods. The Commission is currently accepting proposals

to procure a consulting team that would conduct the multi-year environmental review, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. This is only the first step in a lengthy process.” and

WHEREAS, the Township wants to ensure that all residents of Hopewell Township, as well as the members of the Hopewell Township Committee, have the opportunity to provide meaningful and timely comments to the DRJTBC throughout the process of considering changes to the Washington Crossing Bridge.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hopewell Township Committee fully supports the statement that Mayor Peters-Manning made to the DRJTBC in her email of February 28, 2024, and is deeply concerned about the potential replacement of the Washington Crossing Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township formally requests that the DRJTBC notify the Mayor of Hopewell Township and the Hopewell Township Administrator in advance of any public meetings regarding the potential replacement of the Washington Crossing Bridge in sufficient time to allow meaningful participation by the residents of Hopewell Township and the Hopewell Township Committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township formally requests that the DRJTBC appoint a liaison who will serve as the primary point of contact for the Mayor of Hopewell Township and the Hopewell Township Administrator for any issues, questions or concerns about the potential replacement of the Washington Crossing Bridge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township shall forward a copy of this Resolution to New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy; Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro; New Jersey Department of Transportation Acting Commissioner Francis K. O'Connor; New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette; DRJTBC Members Aladar G. Kamjathy (Chairman), Pam Janvey (Vice Chairwoman), Yuki Moore Laurenti (Treasurer); Daniel H. Grace (Secretary), Lori Ciesla; Michael B. Lavery, John D. Christy, Daniella De Leon and Ismail A. Shahid; State Senator Shirley K. Turner; Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson; Assemblyman Anthony S. Verrelli; and Mercer County Commissioners John A. Cimino (Chair), Kristin L. McLaughlin (Vice Chair), Samuel T. Frisby, Sr., Cathleen M. Lewis, Nina D. Melker, Terrance Stokes, and Lucylle R.S. Walter, and Upper Makefield Township Assistant Township Manager Judy Caporiccio.

Date Adopted: April 15, 2024

CERTIFICATION

I, Katherine Fenton-Newman, Municipal Clerk, of the Township of Hopewell, County of Mercer, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Township Committee at the regular meeting held on the 15th day of April 2024, in the Municipal Building Auditorium, Hopewell Township, New Jersey and via Zoom Video Communications.



Katherine Fenton-Newman, CMR, RMC
Municipal Clerk