

**RESOLUTION OF THE DELAWARE AND RARITAN CANAL COMMISSION 2021-01:
AUTHORIZING THE VICE- CHAIRMAN TO SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
REGARDING CERTAIN NJDOT BRIDGE PROJECTS**

WHEREAS, The New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT) project to replace the bridge that carries Somerset County Route No. 518 over the Delaware and Raritan Canal near the Borough of Rocky Hill resulted in a considerable period of negotiation, and the approval by the Commission of a replacement bridge that was considered incompatible with the canal's status as an historic district; and

WHEREAS, The process employed to arrive at the replacement bridge design was considered unduly protracted by the DOT; and

WHEREAS, It was therefore deemed desirable by both the DOT, the Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to devise an improved and more cooperative approach to the review of future bridge replacement and repair projects by the Commission; and


WHEREAS, A joint DOT-Commission-DEP/SHPO interagency Bridge Task Force ("Task Force") was created pursuant to a letter dated January 30, 2017 comprised of the DOT, the Commission, the Department of Environmental Protection ("DEP") Division of Parks and Forestry, DEP State Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO"), the New Jersey Water Supply Authority ("NJWSA"), local municipality and county representatives, and other stakeholders with an interest in the Delaware and Raritan Canal; and

WHEREAS, The Task Force was charged with the: identification, categorization and the development of a shared understanding of the existing bridges with wooden decks within the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park ("Park"); and the review of the regulatory, policy, design, safety and engineering issues and concerns of both the DOT and the Commission relating to the periodic rehabilitation and potential replacement of those bridges; and

WHEREAS, The Task Force has completed its deliberations and made recommendations regarding the resolution of the issues noted above, which in turn are memorialized in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to improve both the process, design, safety and engineering aspects of future proposed park bridge rehabilitation or replacement projects, and facilitate and expedite the review of the visual, historic and natural quality impacts of such projects pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:45-10; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Commission authorizes the Vice-Chairman to enter into the proposed MOA with the NJDOT and DEP/SHPO which establishes a cooperative framework for the coordinated, standardized and expedited review of the visual, historic and natural quality impacts of projects proposed by the NJDOT to rehabilitate or replace bridges with wooden decks located within the Review Zone of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission.
2. Following signature by the parties, the Executive Director of the Commission shall make the MOA available to the public on the Commission website.
3. The private citizen members of the Task Force appointed by the Commission are thanked for their service, and that such service is concluded and the Task Force hereby disbanded.
4. That a copy of this resolution, signed by the Chairman and attested by the Secretary, be transmitted to the Executive Director of the NJWSA, the DEP Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources, the Director of the Division of Parks and Forestry, and the Superintendent of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park.



Bruce D. Stout, Ph.D., Vice Chairman

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the resolution adopted by the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission at their meeting of May 19, 2021.



John Hutchison, Secretary