



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
**Pennsylvania Historical and Museum
Commission**
The State Museum Building
300 North Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120-0024
www.phmc.pag.gov

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

November 16, 2020

**Historic Peace Church
200 Saint John's Church Road, Camp Hill, Cumberland County
+/- 1.135 acres & 2 buildings**

Background

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) is seeking expressions of interest from parties interested in acquiring or leasing historic Peace Church from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, for either:

- providing public access and historical interpretation and maintaining the building subject to certain covenants as specified in 'Exhibit A'; OR
- providing an alternative use and maintaining the building subject to covenants specified in 'Exhibit A'.

The Commonwealth will consider either proposed leases of over five years or the transfer to the property. Leases of up to ninety-nine years are considered for municipalities and subgovernmental units, who usually partner with a nonprofit to sublease the property. Any transfer will be conditioned on the acceptance of the covenants in Exhibit A and on Commonwealth legislative transfer or surplusage procedures. PHMC is willing to discuss protective covenants with potential new owners of Peace Church who are proposing alternative uses.

This EOI is not a formal solicitation to sell this property and will not result in the sale of the property. If the Commonwealth determines to proceed to sell this property to the general public, a formal solicitation will be issued and interested bidders will be required to submit their proposal via a competitive sealed bid process.

The purpose of the Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) process is to determine whether there are nonprofit or governmental organizations or consortiums who may be interested and capable of stewarding the historic Peace Church for the benefit of the public; OR whether there are nonprofit or governmental organizations, consortiums, or for-profit businesses who may be interested in an alternative use for the church.

Community organizations and governmental entities that may wish to acquire or lease the historic Peace Church, either individually or in partnership with each other, for either the sole or partial purpose of providing historical interpretation, educational programs, or other activities that benefit the community are encouraged to respond to this EOI. The PHMC will review all responses and may engage with respondents to determine how to effectively transition the ownership and stewardship of the property in a manner that will benefit the City of Camp Hill, Cumberland County, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In reviewing the responses, the PHMC may consider the organizational structure, leadership, and financial capacity of the proposed responsible entity(s), the extent and nature of partnerships or collaborations with other organizations, and the degree to which the respondents' programs and plans will benefit the community. Priority will be given to respondents who maintain public access to Peace Church.

About the Property

Historical Significance:

This stone church, simple in design and without a steeple, was erected in 1798 by a Reformed congregation. A Lutheran group obtained a half-interest eight years later in 1806, and the building remained in regular joint use until 1866. Other Protestant denominations also held services there. It therefore interprets the multi-religious society that was accepted in Pennsylvania from its founding. Peace Church is a typical representation of Pennsylvania churches in the last decade of the eighteenth century, but its real significance lies in the fact that it is one Pennsylvania historic landmark that has remained completely unaltered. It is noted for its 1807 organ made by Conrad Doll which is known as the first instrument of its kind to be used in a church in Cumberland County.

Background:

For decades, this site and all related operations have been managed by the Friends of Peace Church. Starting in the early 1980s, the Museum Commission began to carefully review its portfolio of properties in order to determine statewide vs. local/regional significance with a view to focusing available resources on sites with the greatest state-wide significance. Over the last several years, PHMC has been continuing to pursue alternative ownership/stewardship arrangements for properties that may benefit from more local or regional management. Peace Church is among the properties identified as a candidate for a new ownership arrangement, and the Commission has voted to move the property out of the State system. The ultimate goal is to keep this historical resource in the public domain while allowing the local community to embrace the property and take on the responsibility of ownership.

Recent History and Current Status:

The building itself is in excellent condition, having benefited from numerous capital improvement and maintenance projects. The Friends of Peace Church, while willing to continue in their current role managing operations, has declined ownership of the property. To date no other entity has stepped

forward to take over ownership of this property, despite numerous conversations. PHMC is currently looking to identify a potential government entity, non-profit, or for-profit business to consider either the site's current use, or an alternative use.

Estimated Operating Expenses:

The estimated operating expenses for Peace Church are approximately \$1,300-\$1,500 per month in its current use as a museum. These expenses include electricity, water and sewer, telephone, security monitoring, insurance, and grounds maintenance. These figures are based on recent visitation and summer programming; actual expenses may vary based on the type and frequency of use as well as other operational decisions.

Recent Physical Improvement to the Property:

2005	Floor and Joist Repairs; Termite Extermination
2012	Aluminum Handrail
2012	Interior Plaster and Wall Repair
2012	Masonry Repairs
2014	Security Lights at Visitor Center
2014	Interior Painting
2014-2019	Structural Monitoring (no problems found)
2018	Ceiling and Wall Plaster Repairs
2019	New Roof and Roofing Lath

Preparing an Expression of Interest

Interested parties should prepare a response to this EOI specifically providing the following information:

1. Proposed owner or lessee of the property
 - a. Please provide the full legal name of the entity that would own/lease or control the property.
2. Contact information for proposed owner or lessee
 - a. Include the first and last name of the principal point of contact for the organization, organizational mailing address, daytime phone number and email address for the principal contact.
3. Organizational structure
 - a. Describe the structure of the organization, including whether the entity is a unit of local government, a nonprofit organization, or a for-profit business. If the entity is a nonprofit, please indicate whether the organization has been determined to be a 501(c)3 charitable organization by the Internal Revenue Service and whether the organization is registered as a Charitable Organization with the Pennsylvania Department of State.

- b. Describe the structure of the interested organization. If a nonprofit organization, include the size and composition of the governing board and the organization’s mission and core programs.
4. Partners and supporters
 - a. List other organizations that will contribute to the preservation, interpretation, and programming of the site. Describe how these groups may contribute financially or in-kind and how they may be involved in the management and decision-making.
5. Intended uses and programs
 - a. Describe how the property will be interpreted and made available to the public. This should include anticipated hours, types of programs, and any other planned uses of the property. Describe how you would utilize the spaces inside and outside of the building to provide these programs as well any anticipated changes to the property that might be necessary to accommodate these activities. OR
 - b. Describe how you would utilize the spaces inside and outside of the building, as well as any anticipated changes to the property that might be necessary to accommodate the intended use.
6. Financial Plan
 - a. Describe how your organization anticipates generating funds for operating expenses such as utilities and insurance, staffing, routine maintenance, and capital improvements.
7. Monetary Consideration
 - a. Please indicate what amount of monetary consideration, if any, your organization would be willing to pay the Commonwealth for acquisition of the property.
 - b. Please describe your organization’s ability to pay real estate transfer taxes if you were to acquire the property via legislative transfer.

Instructions for Submitting an Expression of Interest

1. Any party wishing to express an interest in acquiring or leasing the subject property pursuant to this EOI, should submit a detailed letter of interest, no later than the due date listed in Paragraph 3 of this Section, to PHMC setting forth thoughtful plans for future utilization of the property. In addition, a non-binding, proposed purchase price must be included indicating what consideration would be paid to the Commonwealth for the purchase of the property. Information showing that the entity is financially capable of undertaking the acquisition/lease and performing ongoing maintenance of the property should also be included.
2. Attached to this EOI as Exhibit “A”, is the “Declaration of Restrictive Covenants for Historic Preservation” that PHMC would require the property to be subject to for any future sale.
3. All expressions of interest, including all supporting materials as appropriate, must be **received** by the Commonwealth on or before 3:00 P.M. Eastern Time on January 25, 2021. Expressions of interest and supporting materials must be submitted electronically by that deadline to this resource account address, RA-PHPeaceChurchREOI@pa.gov

All expressions of interest should be clearly marked “Peace Church” in the Subject line of the email. Any expressions of interest received after 3:00 P.M. Eastern Time, January 25, 2021, will be rejected.

Ownership

All materials submitted in response to this Request for Expression of Interest shall become the property of PHMC. Expressions of interest and any supporting materials will not be returned to submitting parties, nor will PHMC consider any expenses that submitting parties may occur in preparing their expressions of interest. All materials submitted will be kept confidential. This information will not be shared with other submitting parties.

Site Visit and Property Inspection

PHMC will provide interested parties with the opportunity to perform a Peace Church site visit and property inspection on Tuesday, December 9 beginning at 11a.m., Eastern Time. All persons will be required to wear face coverings and observe social distancing protocols, in accordance with current directives of the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Groups will be limited to 3 persons and must pre-register by contacting Janice Mullin at jamullin@pa.gov by 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time on Monday, November 30. The Commonwealth is not responsible for any accidents while on the site.

Disclaimer to Interested Parties

PHMC currently does not have legislative authority to convey the subject property. The purpose of the EOI is to gauge if there is any interest by the general public to acquire the property. Neither PHMC nor any party submitting a letter of interest will be bound to proceed with a sale/purchase/transfer/lease of the property.

Exhibit “A”

DECLARATION OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

IN RE

Peace Church

By and Between

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Acting By and Through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission [Grantor]

And

[Insert name of Grantee] [Grantee]

PHMC is willing to discuss protective covenants with potential new owners of Peace Church who are proposing alternative uses.

- I. **PURPOSE.** This restrictive covenant for historic preservation is authorized by [insert name of legislation transferring the property]. Its purpose is to assure that Peace Church will be retained in perpetuity as a publicly accessible historic resource, to maintain its National Register of Historic Places listing in perpetuity and that the building and grounds are preserved and well maintained, free from any uses that would be inconsistent with the historic values of Peace Church.

- II. **PROPERTY DESCRIPTION.** The real property that is subject to this restrictive covenant for historic preservation is known as Peace Church and is legally described in Exhibit B and includes approximately 1.135 acres, located in the city of Camp Hill, county of Cumberland, Pennsylvania with an address of **200 Saint John’s Church Road, Camp Hill, PA 17011**. Images and location map can be found in Exhibit C. For Grantor’s Title to the property, see deed from **COVENANTS**. In consideration of the conveyance of the aforementioned real property, Grantee covenants and agrees for itself, its heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns that the said herein conveyed property shall be subject to the following historic preservation restrictions, and shall do or refrain from doing with respect to the subject property all acts required or prohibited by the following preservation restrictions:
 - a. **Maintenance and Preservation.** Peace Church shall be maintained and preserved in a manner that accessible by the public and for a demonstrable public benefit with maintenance and preservation standards acceptable to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission or, if it is not in existence, those officers of the Commonwealth responsible for historic preservation.

- b. **National Register.** Peace Church is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and shall be maintained and preserved in a manner consistent with that designation.
- c. **Historic Structures.** Peace Church shall be maintained and preserved in accordance with best practices according to the most up-to-date editions of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Rehabilitation being the minimum acceptable level.
- d. **Landscape.** The landscape of Peace Church shall be preserved in manner consistent with the historic characteristics of the subject property and shall not be used in manner that would impair or interfere with the historic interpretation of the subject property.
- e. **Prohibited Uses.** No construction, alteration, rehabilitation, remodeling, demolition, site development, ground disturbance, removal of buildings, addition of buildings, or use inconsistent with this covenant, or any other action, shall be undertaken or permitted to the subject property without the prior written approval of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.
- f. **Alterations/Modifications/Repairs.** With the prior written approval of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, alterations, modifications, repairs or other work may be permitted to the subject property, provided:
 - i. Notice. Timely notice shall be afforded to the Commission in advance of any such requested work on the subject property.
 - ii. Time. The Commission shall have 45 days from the date of receipt of such notice to review and approved the requested work in writing. Consent shall be implied if the Commission does not issue a written response approving the request.
- g. **Archeology and other Ground Disturbing Activities.** Mining, excavating, dredging or removing from the subject property any natural resource which removal would alter the historic value of the property is prohibited without the prior written approval of the Commission. Archeological investigation may be required by the Commission for any ground disturbing work and Grantee shall bear full financial responsibility for any such work.
 - i. Archeological Discoveries. In the event archeological materials are discovered during any ground disturbing activities, work shall temporarily cease and the Commission shall be consulted for guidance and direction before ground disturbing work may continue.
 - ii. Standards for Archeology. Any archeological work conducted on the subject property shall be performed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's

Standards and Guidelines for Archeological Documentation and any further standards and guidelines the Commission may require.

- h. **Licensed Facility.** The Peace Church shall not be used as a licensed facility, as defined by 4 Pa.C.S. 1103 (relating to definitions), or any other similar type of facility authorized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Title shall immediately revert to and reinvest in the Commonwealth should this section be violated.

- III. **INSPECTION AND COMPLIANCE.** The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by and through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, reserves the right to enforce these preservation restrictions and shall, at all reasonable times and upon reasonable notice, have access to the subject property for purposes of inspection and compliance with these historic preservation restrictions.
- IV. **RIGHT OF REVERTER.** The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by and through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, hereby reserves for itself, heirs, successors and assigns, a right of reverter on Peace Church, which shall revert to and reinvest in the Commonwealth by operation of law should any sale, transfer, or use of the Peace Church be inconsistent with or in violation of the restrictions contained herein. The Commission may waive this provision provided the Grantee petitions the Commission, in writing, for such waiver.
- V. **EXCLUSION.** The Grantee agrees that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by and through any of its agencies, in no way assumes any obligation whatsoever for maintaining, repairing, or administering the subject property covered by these restrictive covenants for historic preservation.
- VI. **SUBJECT TO OTHER RESTRICTIONS.** The conveyance of Peace Church shall be made under and subject to all easements, servitudes and other restrictions on the subject property including, but not limited to: rights of way for ingress and egress, public utilities or other interests vested in third parties.
- VII. **DURATION.** These restrictive covenants for historic preservation shall be binding in perpetuity on Grantee, its heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns and shall be applicable to both the land and buildings and shall be deemed to run with the land.

Exhibit "B"

Description of Property

Beginning at a nail located at the intersection of the center lines of L. R. 21079, known as St. John's Road, and L. R. 507, known as Trindle Road; thence south 64 degrees 57 minutes 30 seconds west 88.04 feet to a point; by an arc to the right with a radius of 22918.31 feet a distance of 84.37 feet along the center line of Trindle Road to a nail; thence north 27 degrees 27 minutes 30 seconds west 116.71 feet to a nail; thence north 26 degrees 39 minutes 00 seconds west 273.15 feet parallel to a stone wall to an iron pin; thence north 69 degrees 23 minutes 30 seconds east a distance of 78.90 feet to a nail in the center line of St. John's Road; thence by an arc along the center line of St. John's Road with a radius of 1910.08 feet a distance of 144.44 feet to a nail; thence south 39 degrees 45 minutes 30 seconds east 325.75 feet to the place of Beginning, containing 1.135 acres of land, more or less.

Having thereon erected a two story brick church building known as Peace Church, or sometimes designated as the German Reformed Church of Peace of Hampden Township, and other improvements.

Being the same premises which the German Reformed Congregation granted an equal undivided moiety of said church to the German Lutheran Congregation by articles of Agreement dated May 18, 1806 and recorded in Cumberland County in Deed Book R, Volume 1, page 536 on December 7, 1807 and later recorded in deed book D, Volume 2, page 133 on April 19, 1852.

Exhibit "C"







