

## Evolution of the Riverton Preservation Roundtable



*The 1901 Frederick Groves Mansion  
411 Lippincott Avenue*

On March 13, 2023, immediately after Superior Court found Riverton's preservation ordinance to be legally flawed, the owner of the 1901 Frederick Groves Mansion at 411 Lippincott Avenue demolished it and built three new houses on the site.



Residents and town officials were horrified and The Historical Society of Riverton convened this Roundtable to advise Borough Council on further destruction of our historic character.

*The **Riverton Historic Preservation Roundtable** is an ad hoc citizens' group representing a variety of constituencies which has met since March 2023.*

On January 25, 2023, Burlington County Superior Court struck down Riverton's Demolition Ordinance, allowing destruction to proceed of the 120-year-old Groves Mansion at 409-411 Lippincott Avenue – and stripping ALL of our historic homes of their protection from demolition.

Superior Court Judge Jeanne T. Covert went out of her way to explain it clearly to the Borough of Riverton: while the Borough absolutely has the power to protect historic structures under State law, *and* our Master Plan directed that we do that, our ordinance was legally flawed. The Borough needed a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to protect our historic character.

Judge Covert pointed out that HPCs are routine in most of New Jersey's historic towns. She flatly stated that HPCs, not Planning Boards, handle historical issues, and that the scope of an HPC's duties, in addition to administering a Demolition Ordinance, would be as broad as Riverton chose to decide.

The Historical Society of Riverton convened this Roundtable to advise Borough Council on further destruction of our historic character. It was a group of equal constituencies, assisted by a Moderator and a Secretary. After considerable work, it recommended the initial terms of an HPC to Borough Council in mid-2023, the first power being to halt demolitions of historic sites, under the statement "No more Teardowns".

Reconvened in late 2024 to address other major threats to our Historic District, this current Roundtable voted overwhelmingly for this statement "Lose No More Historic Character!"

The 2024-2025 Roundtable represents these constituencies (alphabetically):

- Apartment owners
- Architectural Review Committee (former)
- Borough Council
- Borough Historian
- Commercial property owners
- Generational legacy residents
- Historical Society of Riverton
- Insurance professionals
- Planning Board
- Porch Club
- Professionals in the history/planning field, and
- Realtors

Asked to represent these constituencies for the 2024-2025 effort were:

Joe Augustyn  
Nicole Belolan  
Kerry Brandt  
Bill Brown  
Pat Brunker  
Hank Croft  
Kirk Fullerton  
Mike Kearney  
John Latimer  
John Laverty  
Lindsay Mills-Smyth  
Roger Prichard  
Joe Rainer  
Scott Reed  
Joe Threston  
Edgar Wilburn  
Keith Williams, Jr.

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