

Friends of Historic Flemington

PO BOX 289, FLEMINGTON, NJ 08822

Friends of Historic Flemington.org



PRESS RELEASE

June 15, 2021

Media contact: Gary Schotland

908-507-2708

Friends of Historic Flemington Leader Wins Governor's Award

Joanne Braun of Raritan Township has won the New Jersey State Governor's Jefferson Award for Public Service.

The award honors volunteer efforts that achieve measurable community impact and represent outstanding acts of public service without the expectation of recognition or compensation.

Recipients must demonstrate unique vision, dedication and tenacity of heroic proportion and serve as inspiration for others. Ms. Braun's award was presented in the Founders/Innovators category.

In 2016, Ms. Braun founded the Save the Union Hotel Facebook page to raise awareness around a proposed redevelopment project in the heart of Flemington's historic downtown that would have demolished the Union Hotel and three adjacent 19th century buildings to make way for an eight-story mixed-use complex with 900 parking spaces.

Her advocacy, along with that of countless others, spurred the formation of Friends of Historic Flemington, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation established to protect and celebrate Flemington's history. Ms. Braun is currently a member of the organization's Board of Trustees.

Friends of Historic Flemington waged a series of legal battles to oppose the demolition and to moderate the scale of development.

As a result of the Friends' advocacy and the significant pressure the organization brought at local and state levels, instead of a sad replica of the Union Hotel and a series of eight-story structures incompatible with the scale and aesthetics of the historic district, the landmark Union Hotel, the Nevius building at 78 Main Street, and the Hunterdon County National Bank building at 90 Main were saved. All are slated for adaptive reuse in a revised redevelopment project that has been meaningfully reduced from the scale of the massive footprint first unveiled in 2016.

The 2020 New Jersey State Governor's Jefferson Awards ceremony, originally slated for this past summer, was delayed due to the pandemic. 2020 awards were presented in a virtual ceremony in 2021. Each award winner received a certificate signed by Gov. Phil Murphy.

#