

Bucks County Justice Center plans

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**Finding aid prepared by Celia Caust-Ellenbogen and Faith
Charlton through the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden
Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories.**

Last updated on November 19, 2013.

Doylestown Historical Society

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Summary Information

Repository	Doylestown Historical Society
Creator	Bucks County (Pa.). County Commissioners
Title	Bucks County Justice Center plans
Call number	10
Date [inclusive]	1998-2013
Extent	2 linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	The 2008 decision to build a new Bucks County Justice Center in Doylestown, Pennsylvania was controversial. A new parking garage was built from 2008 to 2010, and construction for the new courthouse began in 2011. The Bucks County Justice Center plans, 1998-2013, include reports, correspondence, site plans, newspaper clippings, photographs, resolutions, and other documents relative to planning the construction of the justice center.

Biography/History

The 2008 decision to build a new Bucks County Justice Center in Doylestown, Pennsylvania was controversial. Proponents of the new center pointed out that the previous courthouse was constructed in the early 1950s and 1960s, when the County's population was half the size it was in 2008 and it employed less than one-third the number of judges (4 versus 13). Then-President Judge David Heckler threatened that he and the other judges would sue Bucks County if a new courthouse was not built. However,

opponents rejoined that a new center was an unnecessary expense to taxpayers and that other county services should take priority. Moreover, some have alleged that the construction was poorly planned, the design incomplete, and the project poorly managed.

Phase I, construction of a new parking garage, began in 2008; a ribbon cutting ceremony for the completed garage was held in mid 2010. Phase II, demolition of the old parking garage, was accomplished in late 2010. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new courthouse was held in mid 2011, and construction is ongoing as of mid 2013.

Bibliography:

Bucks County. "Bucks County Capital Projects: Bucks County Justice Center." Accessed July 23, 2013. <http://www.buckscounty.org/CapitalProjects/JusticeCenter.aspx>.

Weckselblatt, Gary. "Deconstructing the Construction of Bucks County's Justice Center." *PhillyBurbs.com*, October 17, 2011. Accessed July 23, 2013. http://www.phillyburbs.com/my_town/doylestown/deconstructing-the-construction-of-bucks-county-s-justice-center/article_e6d129a9-4bbe-562a-a293-e5b211c2faf2.html.

Scope and Contents

This collection includes reports, correspondence, site plans, newspaper clippings, photographs, resolutions, and other documents relative to planning the construction of the new Bucks County Justice Center in Doylestown, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. A rough inventory of the collection contents is as follows:

- The Courthouse: A Planning Guide to Courthouses
- Paying for Tomorrow's Courthouse Today
- Courthouse illustrated site plan, October 2001
- Proposal - Courthouse Facility Master Planning, March 2000
- Judicial Space committee reports, 1999-2001
- Facility Master Plan - Final Report, April 2001
- Judicial Space summary correspondence, 2001-2004 and 2010
- Courthouse news clippings, 1999-2010
- Space studies, 2000
- Facility Master Plan, 2001 February
- Facility Master Plan, 2001 March
- 8 presentations from various architects, 2002-2003
- Courthouse space studies, 2001-2002
- National Center for State Courts Consulting Services, 2002
- Architect selection, 2002-2003
- Doylestown Borough impact study, 2001-2002
- Summaries, 2001-2002

- Options as proposed by Richard W. Manna, 2002
- Doylestown Borough press release, January 2002
- Site mapping, 2002
- Off-street parking and loading, August 5, 2000
- Doylestown Borough conceptual studies for courthouse expansion
- Doylestown Revitalization Board meeting, February 19, 2002
- Doylestown Borough ordinance, November 21, 2002
- Concept design package, May 14, 2009
- Design meeting, April 8, 2010
- Doylestown Borough Council questions, undated
- Miscellaneous notes

Administrative Information

Doylestown Historical Society

Finding aid prepared by Celia Caust-Ellenbogen and Faith Charlton through the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories.

Sponsor

This preliminary finding aid was created as part of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories. The HCI-PSAR project was made possible by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Access Restrictions

Contact Doylestown Historical Society for information about accessing this collection.

Immediate Source of Acquisition Note

Gift of Judge Barry McAndrews, 2013.

Processing Information Note

Summary descriptive information on this collection was compiled in 2012-2014 as part of a project conducted by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania to make better known and more accessible the largely hidden collections of small, primarily volunteer run repositories in the Philadelphia area. The Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories (HCI-PSAR) was funded by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

This is a preliminary finding aid. No physical processing, rehousing, reorganizing, or folder listing was accomplished during the HCI-PSAR project.

In some cases, more detailed inventories or finding aids may be available on-site at the repository where this collection is held; please contact Doylestown Historical Society directly for more information.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Bucks County (Pa.). County Commissioners
- Bucks County Justice Center (Pa.)

Geographic Name(s)

- Bucks County (Pa.)
- Doylestown (Pa.)

Subject(s)

- Architecture
- Building
- Courthouses