COPY

Hello John!
I sent this to all the Council members today and wanted to include you and the HDC as a heads up.
Be well -
Arnold

October 8, 2026

Chairman Nathan T. Calouro
Bristol Town Council
10 Court Street
Bristol, RI 02809

Subject: Support for BH&PS Reuse of 10 Court Street

Dear Chairman Calouro,

As a community planner and historic preservationist with over 35 years of professional experience—and a long-time former Bristol resident—I am writing to express my strong support for allowing the Bristol Historical & Preservation Society (BH&PS) to engage with the Town to assess the feasibility of their reuse of 10 Court Street. I urge the Council to initiate a thoughtful process to assess the feasibility of this vision rather than immediately seeking private redevelopment.

It is worth giving BH&PS and allied organizations the first opportunity to reuse this building for three distinct reasons:

- **A Sustainable Home for Local History:** BH&PS has outgrown its headquarters at 48 Court Street. Acquiring 10 Court Street provides the necessary climate-controlled space to preserve Bristol's irreplaceable archives, expand educational programming, and collaborate with partners like the Fourth of July Committee.
- **Preserving the Civic Heart:** For over 150 years, the block bounded by Hope, Court, and Church Streets has served as Bristol's primary civic core. Retaining non-profit, public stewardship preserves foot traffic and maintains an intact civic landscape alongside Burnside Memorial Hall and the Memorial Victory Garden.

- **Protecting Downtown Scale:** Selling 10 Court Street in a process where the highest price sale to a private developer is the primary goal introduces severe risks, including potential pressure to demolish the garage (a contributing National Register structure) and the threat of out-of-scale housing infill that degrades adjacent historic monuments.

Once public property is ceded to private development, its public value is lost permanently. I encourage the Council to collaborate with BH&PS and other civic groups to consider the feasibility of 10 Court Street as a shared community asset for future generations. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Arnold N. Robinson, AICP
34 Hawthorne Avenue, Barrington, RI

P.S.: This letter has been shortened from its initial length; I have many materials related to similar projects in other communities that may be useful to the Town of Bristol in its decision-making process. Please reach out if you would like me to send more detailed information and materials, or to discuss any aspects of this project.

Cc: Catherine Zipf (BH&PS), Diane Williamson (Town of Bristol), John Allen (Bristol HDC)