



# Ten Things Every Resident Should Know

## 1. The controversy surrounding renovation of the former school is not complicated.

The City of Napoleon's opposition to the Cultural Center of Henry County (CCHC) community center stems from its desire to obtain the 9.235 acres of CCHC property at **virtually no cost** and **demolish the former school**.

**To be clear, the City does not own nor control the property.**

CCHC is opposed to the demolition because it is not in the best interest of residents. CCHC believes repurposing the former school into a multi-purpose venue will provide **significant, immediate, community-wide benefits** for current and future generations.

## 2. It's about your family and our shared future.

Demolishing the old school does nothing to improve life for residents of Henry County.

We, at CCHC, are invested in this community and want to make it better for students, adults, and local businesses. We want to bring more jobs and families to the area and make this a place where people want to live, work, and play. **It's about rural economic development.** You'll find impact studies posted at our website: [www.culturalcenterhc.org](http://www.culturalcenterhc.org).

There is no need to destroy a historic building that can be cost effectively repurposed into a community center that brings economic development, enhanced quality of life, and includes room for housing and green space as noted in the City's Master Plan.

## 3. Don't settle for incomplete and inaccurate information.

Recent actions by Napoleon Area City Schools (NACS) and the City of Napoleon administration regarding property owned by the Cultural Center of Henry County (CCHC), as reported in the Northwest Signal, are based on erroneous presumptions.

## 4. Residents are better off informed, especially regarding current litigation.

The decision by NACS Board of Education and Superintendent Dr. Erik Belcher to pursue litigation against CCHC was based on reported attempts to "negotiate" with the CCHC Board of Trustees.

Negotiation requires two or more parties who bring different sides of an issue or issues to the table and attempt to reach a compromise through dialogue.

In this case, Dr. Belcher told the CCHC that if they would support the upcoming NACS levy/bond issue and serve on a steering committee to plan renovations to the gymnasium at the NACS Jr. High, the Board of Education **would hold off on litigation** until the day after the levy/bond issue passed in May. Then litigation would be filed unless the CCHC Board agreed to demolish their buildings using a Brownfield Grant applied for by the City and **deed their property over to the City for \$1.**

## **5. Nothing was proposed by NACS or the City in writing to CCHC, but CCHC was expected to accept the “agreement” sight unseen.**

NACS was unwilling to sit down at a negotiating table with CCHC to discuss how both organizations could support each other’s missions and co-exist for the good of the community. With nothing proposed in writing, no action could be taken by the CCHC Board. Accepting the “agreement” would also virtually bring an end to CCHC with no building, no property, and minimal financial assets.

## **6. NACS administration has mistakenly viewed the CCHC project as competition for school projects.**

While CCHC always supports enhanced arts and sports facilities and opportunities for county residents of all ages, the most comprehensive and cost-effective solution would be achieved with both enhanced facilities in NACS school district and a functioning community center serving all of Henry County.

CCHC is funded by private donations and grants. CCHC **does not compete** with schools and city government for voters and local tax levy funds.

CCHC is a complementary facility to all Henry County schools and communities, serving youth and adult populations. CCHC programs include adult and youth choral groups, historical programs, the Napoleon Community Band, theater groups, community concerts, dance, cooking, and music instruction, adult and youth club and intermural sports leagues, job training, and more. Most of these programs cannot be offered in the schools due to scheduling and funding.

## **7. The City of Napoleon’s opposition to the CCHC community center stems from its desire to obtain the 9.235 acres of CCHC property at virtually no cost.**

This has been demonstrated by their pursuance of a Brownfield Grant to demolish property **the City neither owns nor controls**. The City is further adding to opposition of the Cultural Center by planning for a municipal building on the site coupled with administrator’s actions creating artificial obstacles to CCHC progress on the community center.

There is plenty of available land around Napoleon that can be purchased for a fair price on which to build a new municipal building. There is no need to destroy a historic building that can be cost effectively be repurposed into a community center that brings economic development, enhanced quality of life, and includes room for housing and green space as noted in the City’s Master Plan.

## **8. Community members should ask City and NACS officials why they have fought against this plan for community development from the very beginning.**

NACS and City administrators feel that eliminating a community center and raising bond issues for new builds of \$21.5 million and \$47 million respectively is the best use of community funds. CCHC feels that they can open a community center for a small fraction of these numbers that will quickly generate activity and business in the county.

## **9. The City's plan to consolidate emergency services means greater risk.**

Why would the City want to consolidate police, fire, rescue, and city offices in one building in a residential neighborhood adjacent to both the downtown and riverfront? Sirens will be blaring day and night. In the event of terrorism, a severe flood, or tornado all of the City services could be disabled at once. Multiple sites protect against this possibility.

## **10. Why has the CCHC Board remained steadfast in the face of NACS and City attacks?**

CCHC is comprised of community members. We live here. We raise our families here. We are not here to take a job for a few years and then move on. We have devoted ourselves to serving in our workplaces, schools, churches, and civic organizations. We are invested in this community and want to make it better for students, adults, and local businesses.

We want to bring more jobs and families to the area and make this a place where they want to live, work, and play. We want what is best for NACS students and Their families, for the City of Napoleon and all of Henry County, and for local businesses and employers. We want to revive Napoleon and help it grow.