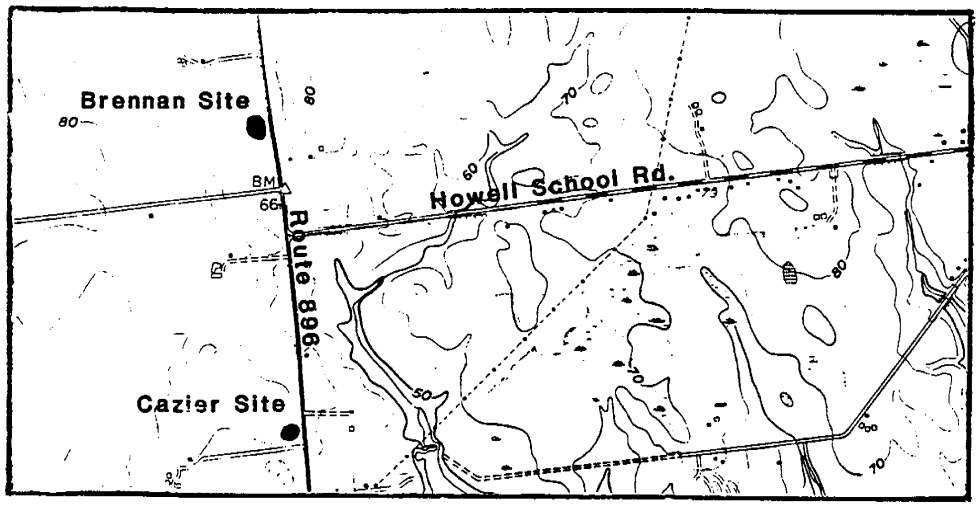
APPENDIX II: Public Information Handout

jasper point preform



jasper uniface

BRENNAN PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

A prehistoric cultural resource mitigation program is being conducted by the Delaware Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, and the Federal Highway Administration in conjunction with the University of Delaware Center for Archaeological Research, at the Brennan Prehistoric Archaeological Site (7NC-F-61A). The mitigation is necessitated by the proposed widening and dualization of Delaware Route 896 between Route 4 - West Chestnut Hill Road and the Summit Bridge approach.

The Brennan Site was first located during an earlier cultural resource reconnaissance of the Route 896 Project Area. The site has been identified as a specialized stone tool manufacturing area, where fragments of cryptocrystalline rock known as "jasper" were manufactured into various forms of stone tools. The source of this stone is the Delaware Chalcedony Complex, including Iron and Chestnut Hills, located five miles to the north. Artifacts recovered from the site consist primarily of flakes of jasper which are the by-products of stone tool manufacturing activities. The site has also yielded projectile points diagnostic of the Woodland I cultural period, which lasted from approximately 3000 B. C. to A. D. 1000.

The Brennan prehistoric site is significant for two reasons. First, it constitutes an opportunity to study the procurement and processing of Delaware Chalcedony Complex jasper. Although other prehistoric sites have been investigated in the Iron and Chestnut Hill Areas, the Brennan Site is located much farther away from the prehistoric quarries than are other sites with a similar level of jasper reduction. Second, the site contains artifacts which are buried below plow-disturbed soils, a phenomenon rarely encountered in this vicinity. These artifacts are at or near the original place they were deposited, and as such afford the opportunity to study prehistoric behavior as reflected in patterned artifact distributions.

If you request any further information or particulars concerning this cultural resource project, please contact the site supervisor, Scott Watson, at 451-6590, or Kevin Cunningham, DelDOT Archaeologist at 736-4644.