

Chapter 2 – Methodology and Research Design

Research Objectives

In order to comply with the requirements set forth in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the objective of the historic architectural survey is the identification of all historic resources listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places within the APE for the current project. Both the Location/Identification Level (Phase I) and Evaluation Level (Phase II) surveys were completed, including background research, development of a historic context, and survey and evaluation of properties more than 50 years of age within the APE.

Methodology and Background Research

The methodology for the survey included background research to identify known resources and develop a historic context for evaluating significance, and fieldwork to determine the APE and survey properties fifty years of age or older. The property that was surveyed has been evaluated for eligibility for listing to the National Register of Historic Places. After the initial field survey, the files of the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (DE SHPO) were examined. Previous historic sites surveys and documents on file with the DE SHPO were reviewed to identify any previously surveyed resources within the APE. DelDOT road designs and contract files from the 1930s through present were examined for relevant information. The relocation of Delaware Route 141, conducted in contracts 66-12-003 and 69-02-002, directly impacted the prison property. Additional background research included a review of relevant primary and secondary sources, including local histories, aerial photography, and historic maps. With the known information on hand, DelDOT staff verified a total of three properties 50-years-old or older through DelDOT road design documents, aerial photography, and deed research. For the purposes of this project, the relevant date of construction for placement on the National Register was 1962. Research has shown that none of the properties within the APE has been previously assessed for National Register eligibility.

Objectives

After collecting background research, an architectural survey and assessment of the project area based on current construction plans was carried out to accomplish the following:

1. Identify the range of resources 50 years of age or older – starting with resources constructed c. 1962 – within the current study area that would experience a direct impact (i.e. a taking of property); and,
2. Locate other individual properties or districts that could be potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Architectural Survey and Assessment of the Project Plans

In order to be eligible for listing to the National Register of Historic Places, a resource (i.e. building, site, structure, object, or district) must meet the 50-years-old or older age criterion, or meet the criteria consideration for properties achieving significance within the last 50 years. For the purposes of this project, resources 50-years-old or older within the APE were documented. In addition, resources must also meet the Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR § 60.4) as stated in *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*:

the quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is defined in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess all or some combination of these seven characteristics integrity to a high degree: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to history or prehistory (NPS 1997).

A property must also retain sufficient integrity from its period of significance. Expected resource types and guidelines for National Register evaluation are included within each of the historic contexts.

DelDOT qualified staff conducted the historic resources survey during July and August 2009. The effort included an examination of all those buildings located on tax parcels that were within the APE (see APE maps, Figure 3). Historic maps, road plans, and deeds were examined to determine approximate dates of construction for buildings within the study area.

During the course of fieldwork, the National Register eligibility status of each resource was discussed and descriptions were prepared. Resources were photographed using a digital camera. Qualified DelDOT staff filled out DE SHPO CRS forms later in the process. Forms and original copies of research documents are stored at the DE SHPO and DelDOT Administration Building.

On July 2, 2009 DelDOT Environmental Studies staff along with Project Development North Engineers Shanté Hastings and Sarah Criswell visited the site of the proposed project. The main purpose of this field view was to walk to site and gather preliminary information about what properties needed to be evaluated for the National Register. Based on the small scope of the project the field view demonstrated to Environmental Studies staff that any evaluations would be limited to those properties that had a potential to be impacted. The potential effects to properties impacted by this project include, the physical taking of property and visual impacts. Potential effects from air quality and noise are not anticipated. Each property identified as fifty years old or older (cut off date of 1962) was visited to discuss the exact nature of construction around, on, or by the property.

DelDOT Project Development North Engineers and Environmental Studies Planner Jon Schmidt met with the current warden Steven Wesley at what is currently the John L. Webb Correctional Facility at 200 Greenbank Road in Wilmington. The scope of the project was explained and questions of purpose and need were addressed. Warden Wesley asked questions about reworking the entry to the facility, relocating the exterior boundary fence and the timing and safety of a nearby bus stop.

The proposed project involves making improvements to Greenbank Road at the intersection with Albertson Boulevard. The roadway will be widened slightly, while pedestrian sidewalks will be realigned and turning movements improved. Upgrades to the roadside drainage system will take place and involve removing an eleven foot portion of a stone remnant wall closest to Greenbank Road at the northwest corner of the prison property.

The project will enhance safety at the intersection for pedestrians, transit, and motor vehicles. New striping and signage are also expected. Properties subject to a property acquisition (permanent easement or taking for new right of way strip) will be evaluated for eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The project is anticipated to alter the physical character of the property through property acquisition and potentially introduce visual elements that could affect the property's setting. The overall project undertaking and the number of properties that may experience an impact (or an effect) is minor.

Expected Results and Property Types

Based on results of historical research, demographic study, and the project's location, DelDOT staff expected to find a variety of property types. The history of Greenbank can be separated into three different periods. Prior to 1899, when the Board of Trustees of the New Castle County Workhouse purchased property for the construction of a prison, Greenbank was a mill town surrounded by a rural landscape. The first turnpike in Delaware was chartered January 30, 1809 between Newport, DE and Gap Tavern, PA. The turnpike, today Delaware State Route 41, passes just west of the project area. Between 1867 and 1872, the Delaware and Western Railroad constructed a line from Wilmington to Landenberg, PA. Portions of this rail line remains active for pleasure trips operated by the Wilmington and Western Railroad. In 1895 the Wilmington and

Brandywine Springs Electric Railway provided a trolley connection between Wilmington, Elsmere, and Brandywine Springs Park. Both of these railroad features are near the project area, but outside the proposed APE. In 1899 the Levy Court appropriated funds for the Board of Trustees of the New Castle County Workhouse to purchase two parcels totaling 38.25 acres from Ann G. Flinn and the Wilmington and Brandywine Springs Railway. The land purchase changed the landscape of Greenbank drastically. The New Castle County Workhouse was constructed on the consolidated property and opened in 1901. Among a variety of changes through the first half of the twentieth century, the workhouse expanded with the construction of a women's prison in 1929. The next major change in the project area was the construction of Kirkwood Highway (SR 2) in 1938. The highway connected Newark and Wilmington, directing commuter traffic and hastening suburban development in the project area. The New Castle County Workhouse was transferred to the possession of the newly created State Board of Corrections on July 1, 1956. The workhouse closed and was demolished in 1976.

At present, the area around the APE consists of decentralized suburban development with residential, strip commercial, and office uses interspersed. Expected property types include strip malls, mid-century suburban residential dwellings, and buildings associated with the correctional facility. Although not likely, it is possible that railroad remnants and an islanded farmhouse may also be present.