

ABSTRACT

This report presents the results of an effect assessment conducted for proposed corridor improvements to US 301 in St. Georges and Pencader Hundreds, New Castle County, Delaware (Figure 1). This report was prepared in conjunction with Rummel, Klepper, and Kahl (RK&K) for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). Since the undertaking will be federally funded, FHWA seeks to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and the implementing regulations outlined in 36 CFR Part 800. The purpose of the report is to document the potential effect of the proposed project on historic properties (National Register-listed and eligible resources) located within the Area of Potential Effect (APE).

DelDOT recommended the Green North Alternative plus Spur Road as its Preferred Alternative in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Secretary of Transportation announced the Green North Alternative plus Spur Road as the Preferred Alternative on May 16, 2007. For purposes of this report, the “undertaking” is defined as DelDOT’s Preferred Alternative. The APE for the Green North Alternative is shown in Figure 2.

The Preferred Alternative will be constructed as a four-lane, controlled-access tolled highway on a new location between the Delaware-Maryland state line and SR 1, south of the C&D Canal. The alternative will extend generally northward from the Delaware-Maryland state line to north of Middletown near Armstrong Corner Road, where the alignment will then continue northeast to cross over existing US 301 and SR 896 (Boyd’s Corner Road) and tie into SR 1 north of the Biddles Corner Toll Plaza. A two-lane access-controlled Spur Road will be constructed from the vicinity of Armstrong Corner Road, continuing on the ridge route to SR 896 at the base of Summit Bridge. The alignment will be 17.5 miles in length and will include six interchanges and nine overpasses or underpasses. The Preferred Alternative will include Armstrong Corner Road Area Option 2A, Summit Interchange Option 3B, and Ratledge Road Area Option 4B Modified. The Preferred Alternative is described in further detail in Section 1.0 and shown in Figures 2-24 of this report.

The steps to identify historic properties, as described in Section 2.0 of this document, indicated that 22 historic properties are located within the APE of the Green North Alternative. Generally, the limits of the APE extend southwest of the Delaware-Maryland state line, north along US 301, to just south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal (C&D Canal). North of Middletown, the APE extends west and runs briefly along Choptank Road and extends east to SR 1 (Figure 2).

A.D. Marble & Company conducted a historic resources survey for the project from summer 2005 to summer 2006. DelDOT provided concurrence on the Determination of Eligibility Report’s recommendations, and A.D. Marble & Company finalized the report. The Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (DE SHPO) did not provide formal concurrence within the 30-day review period but provided comments and concurrence on the eligibility determinations through correspondence dating from October 2005 to August 2006 (October 14, 2005, January 6, 2006, January 27, 2006, February 23 and 24, 2006, and August 11, 2006). The DE SHPO’s comments on the DEIS effectively confirmed the eligibility determinations (Appendix A). The historic properties located in the APE for the Green North Alternative are listed in Table 3 and

descriptions of these properties and their character-defining features are included in Section 3.0 of this report.

Background research revealed that the following 17 previously listed and eligible resources are located within the APE and retain sufficient integrity to convey their significance:

- B.F. Hanson House, Cultural Resources Survey (CRS) No. N05225;
- Rumsey Farm, CRS No. N00113;
- Hedgelawn, CRS No. N00118;
- Cochran Grange, CRS No. N00117;
- The Maples, CRS No. N00106;
- Rosedale, CRS No. N05148;
- S. Holton Farm, CRS No. N00107;
- Choptank, CRS No. N00109;
- Woodside, CRS No. N00427;
- Governor Benjamin T. Biggs Farm, CRS No. N05123;
- Armstrong-Walker House, CRS No. N05146;
- Achmester, CRS No. N03930;
- Weston, CRS No. N00121;
- Lovett Farm, CRS No. N05132;
- State Bridge Number 383, CRS No. N12636;
- Fairview, CRS No. N05244; and
- Idalia Manor, CRS No. N03947.

Five additional, previously unevaluated resources within the APE for the Green North Alternative were determined eligible for listing in the National Register as a result of the US 301 Project Development historic resources survey:

- Shahan Farm, CRS No. N14388;
- C. Polk House Estate, CRS No. N05221;
- Summerton, CRS No. N00112;
- T. J. Houston Farm, CRS No. N05131; and
- J. Houston House, CRS No. N05195;

Therefore, the Preferred Alternative has the potential to affect 22 historic properties in the vicinity.

Under the direction of 36 CFR 800.5 and 800.6, the Definition of Effect and Criteria of Adverse Effect were applied to this undertaking for the 22 historic properties. The results of the assessment are provided in Table 4 and Sections 4.0 and 5.0 of this document.

Application of the Definition of Effect, as presented in this report, determined that the Preferred Alternative will have “no effect” on the following seven resources:

- Shahan Farm, CRS No. N14388;
- Cochran Grange, CRS No. N00117;

- Woodside, CRS No. N00427;
- Achmester, CRS No. N03930;
- Weston, CRS No. N00121;
- State Bridge Number 383, CRS No. N12636; and
- Fairview, CRS No. N05244.

No property will be acquired from the National Register boundaries of these resources as part of the proposed improvements, resulting in no direct effects. Additionally, indirect impacts will be prevented by intervening landscape features or distances that impair visibility from these resources to the new alignment and/or audible changes that do not meet or begin to approach the threshold for an effect. Thus, these resources will not experience effects to the characteristics that qualify them for listing in the National Register.

As a result of the application of the Criteria of Adverse Effect, the following three properties will not be adversely affected by the proposed undertaking, as the potential visual effects to these resources will not specifically alter the integrity and characteristics that qualify them for listing in the National Register:

- Hedgelawn, CRS No. N00118;
- Lovett Farm, CRS No. N05132; and
- J. Houston House, CRS No. N05195.

Twelve historic properties in the APE for the Green North Alternative will be adversely affected by the undertaking due to the introduction of new visual and/or audible elements that will detract from the integrity and character-defining features of these resources:

- B.F. Hanson House, CRS No. N05225;
- C. Polk House Estate, CRS No. N05221;
- Rumsey Farm, CRS No. N00113;
- Summerton, CRS No. N00112;
- The Maples, CRS No. N00106;
- S. Holton Farm, CRS No. N00107;
- Rosedale, CRS No. N05148;
- Choptank, CRS No. N00109;
- Governor Benjamin T. Biggs Farm, CRS No. N05123;
- Armstrong-Walker House, CRS No. N05146;
- T. J. Houston Farm, CRS No. N05131; and
- Idalia Manor, CRS No. N03947.

Changes in the character of the property's use or of physical features within the property's setting that contribute to its historic significance will occur on many of the above historic properties.

FHWA and DelDOT considered alternatives to avoid and/or minimize adverse effects on historic properties. The Preferred Alternative includes measures to avoid and minimize effects in its

design. As an adverse effect can not be fully avoided or minimized, FHWA and DelDOT proposed a Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with measures to mitigate adverse effects on historic properties. This document can be found in Appendix C of this report. The views of the agencies and the public are included in Section 6.0.

Finally, since the project will extend into Maryland for approximately 2,600 feet to construct a four-lane roadway where existing US 301 tapers to two lanes , consultation with the Maryland State Historic Preservation Office (MD SHPO) was carried out. The staff of the MD SHPO has concurred that there are no historic structures in the project APE that would be affected by the proposed alternative. The MD SHPO has also stated that there does not appear to be the potential for impacts to significant archeological sites as long as the improvements remain within the existing right-of-way (ROW) (Appendix B). The MD SHPO is included as a signatory to the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and, as the project design develops, will participate in future consultation on the phased identification and evaluation of historic properties.