

3.0 BACKGROUND RESEARCH



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A search through the CRS Inventory files was conducted at the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (DESHPO). Background research consisted of examination of historical documents and maps, and archaeological records of the surrounding area. Any registered archaeological sites and/or historic structures in the immediate view of the project area were fully examined for temporal and spatial relationship to the recommended project APE. Sites listed in the *National Register of Historic Places* within the recommended project APE were also reviewed at DESHPO.

The town of Milton, settled in 1672 and officially named in 1807, was established as a shipbuilding community (<http://www.miltonde.com/milton/history.html>). Dense stands of oak, cedar, and pine fostered a productive lumber industry in the area, which was especially conducive for shipbuilding, and the surrounding lands were cleared for the lumber. Subsequently, lands cleared of trees and undergrowth proved to be productive for agricultural crops. The community served as a commercial shipping point, with agricultural products, such as vegetables and lumber, shipped on the Broadkill River to the larger commercial cities like Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Wilmington, Delaware, and finished goods, like glass, iron, and cloth, brought back in exchange.

The earliest maps of the recommended project APE suggest a mixture of agricultural use and residential occupation of the area. The 1868 Beers map of Milton depicts Mulberry Street as a divider between the residential community to the east and open, possibly agricultural lands to the west and north (Figure 3). At that time, a large farmstead, listed as “Wm. A. Hazzard,” comprised a substantial portion of the recommended project APE on the west side of Mulberry Street at the intersection of Willow Street (presently Bay Avenue). Thirteen structures between Clifton Street and Magnolia Street were also located within the recommended project APE (Figure 4). In general, the number of residential dwellings increased towards the southern end of the recommended project APE, near the center of Milton, while the northern portion of the recommended APE remained relatively undeveloped.

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed an increase in residential development in the recommended project APE. However, new dwelling construction was limited to the area between Clifton Street and Magnolia Street, essentially infilling the open spaces between older mid-nineteenth-century structures (Figures 5, 6, and 7). The area changed relatively little by 1960 (Figure 8). The last half of the twentieth century witnessed development into the northern portion of the recommended project APE. The construction of the H.O. Brittingham Elementary School, the Shipbuilders Village townhouse complex, and the commercial businesses situated at the intersection of S.R. 0016 and Mulberry Street introduced new architectural elements into the single lot, single dwelling landscape. New houses were constructed along Mulberry Street in the northern portion of the recommended project APE as residential development spread north to meet S.R. 0016 (Photograph 3).

Background research revealed that a small portion of the recommended project APE resides within the Milton Historic District (S-1110) (Figure 9). The historic district, listed on the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1982, encompasses a wide variety of residential, commercial, religious, and public buildings, as well as Gothic Revival, Second Empire, and Queen Anne styles, from the late eighteenth to early twentieth century (Richardson 1991:6). Three historic structures within the recommended project APE are located in the Milton Historic District. The C.C. Davidson House (S-1110.155), located at 302 Mulberry Street, consists of a mid-nineteenth-century, T-shaped, two-story, single-pile-plan frame structure with a late-nineteenth-century single-story rear addition. A circa 1850 two-story, three bay frame house is present at 128 Broad Street (S-1110.121). In addition, a circa 1860 two-story, three-bay frame dwelling is located at 127 Broad Street (S-1110.122). These three structures are contributing elements to the Milton Historic District (*National Register Nomination Form 1982*).

One historic structure resides outside of the Milton Historic District, but within the viewshed of the recommended project APE. A circa 1910 two-and-a-half story frame dwelling with a pitched roof and cement block foundation is found in the northwest corner of the Mulberry Street and S.R. 0016 intersection (DEBAHP CRS S-3425 1983). The house resides on its original lot, but not in its original location.



Photograph 3: Mulberry Street at Orchard Street, view looking northwest (September 2001).

When S.R. 0016 was widened in 1961, the structure was set further back on the lot to accommodate the highway expansion (DEBAHP CRS S-3425 1983). One additional resource, the Hazzard Farm (S-289), is located on the west side of Mulberry Street at its junction with Bay Avenue. The Hazzard Farm is situated outside of the Milton Historic District. No records pertaining to the Hazzard Farm are on file at the Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

No documented archaeological resources are recorded within the study area.