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). Any registered archaeological sites and/or historic structures in the immediate vicinity of the recommended Mispillion River Greenway Path project APE were examined fully for temporal and spatial relationship to the project APE. Sites listed in the *National Register of Historic Places* within the recommended project APE were also reviewed at DESHPO. Historical maps, including state and local atlases and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, were also consulted as part of the background research.

No archaeological sites are documented within the recommended project APE. The proposed Mispillion River Greenway Path project APE is located between two historic districts, the Victorian South Milford Historic District and the North Milford Historic District, both *National Register*-listed sites under the Historic Resources of Milford Multiple Resources Area (*National Register of Historic Places* 1983). The North Milford Historic District is situated on the north side of the Mispillion River in Kent County, and includes the mixture of late-eighteenth- to early-nineteenth-century brick and frame historic residential dwellings visible from the recommended project APE. The Victorian South Milford Historic District is composed almost entirely of mid-nineteenth century frame dwellings located on large town lots and a small number of brick commercial structures. Bounded by the Mispillion River to the north and the Conrail railroad tracks to the south, the Victorian South Milford Historic District is arranged along South Walnut Street with east and west boundaries extending about one block on either side of the street. The South Milford Historic District represents the western half of Milford's mid-nineteenth-century downtown commercial and industrial district (Figure 3).

The recommended project APE has sustained a variety of industrial and commercial occupations since the middle of the nineteenth century. The earliest record of occupation shows the P.F. Causey Lumberyard on the site of the recommended project APE in 1859 (Byles 1859) (Figure 4). The lumberyard is still present on the property in 1868 (Figure 5). Later Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show three fruit cannery operations on this site spanning the last quarter of the nineteenth and the mid-twentieth centuries.

Figure 3
North Milford Historic District and
Victorian South Milford Historic District Boundaries
Mispillion River Greenway Path (Phase XII)
Milford, Sussex County, Delaware

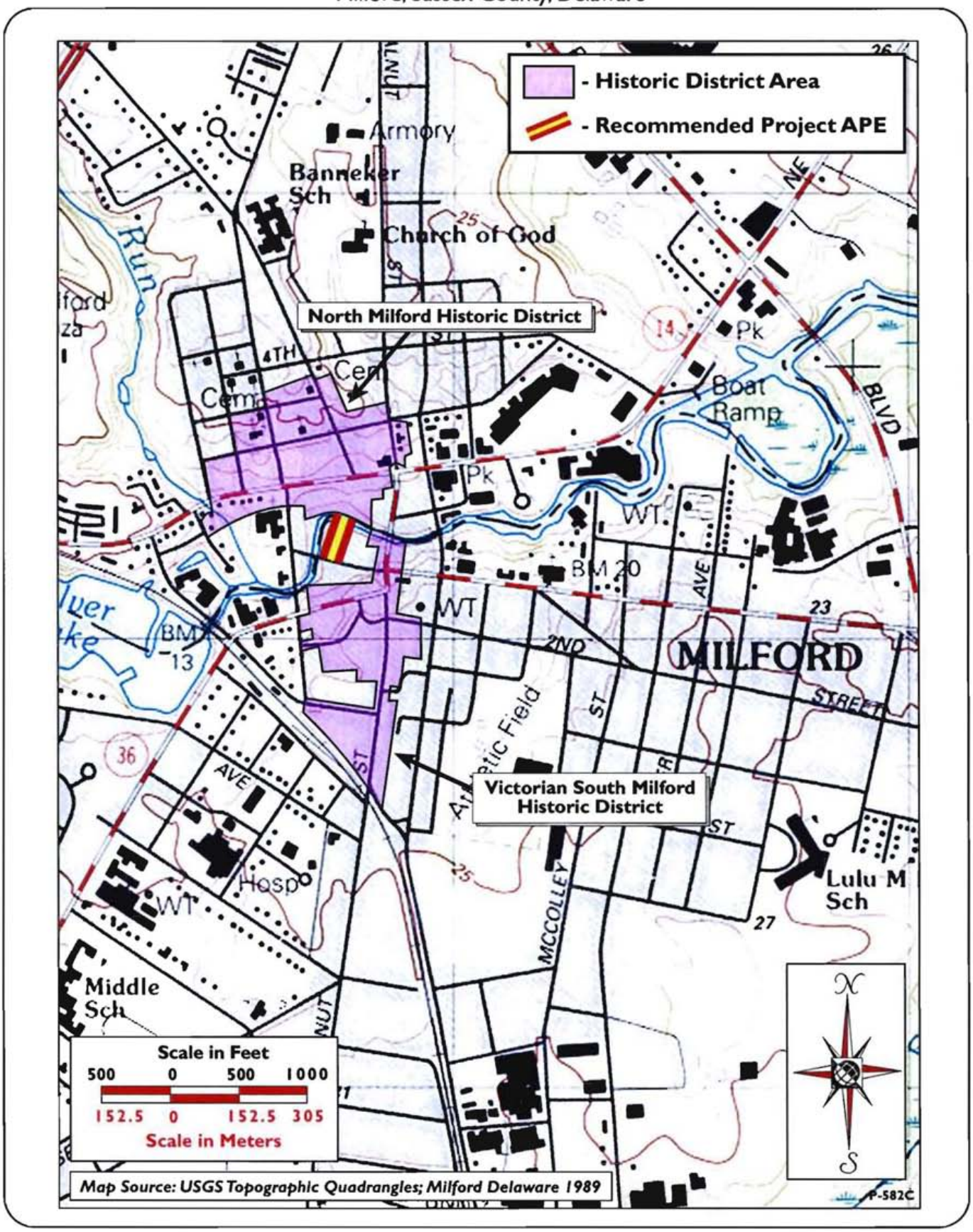

Figure 4
1859 Byles Map of Milford
Mispillion River Greenway Path (Phase XII)
Milford, Sussex County, Delaware

Map Source: Byles 1859

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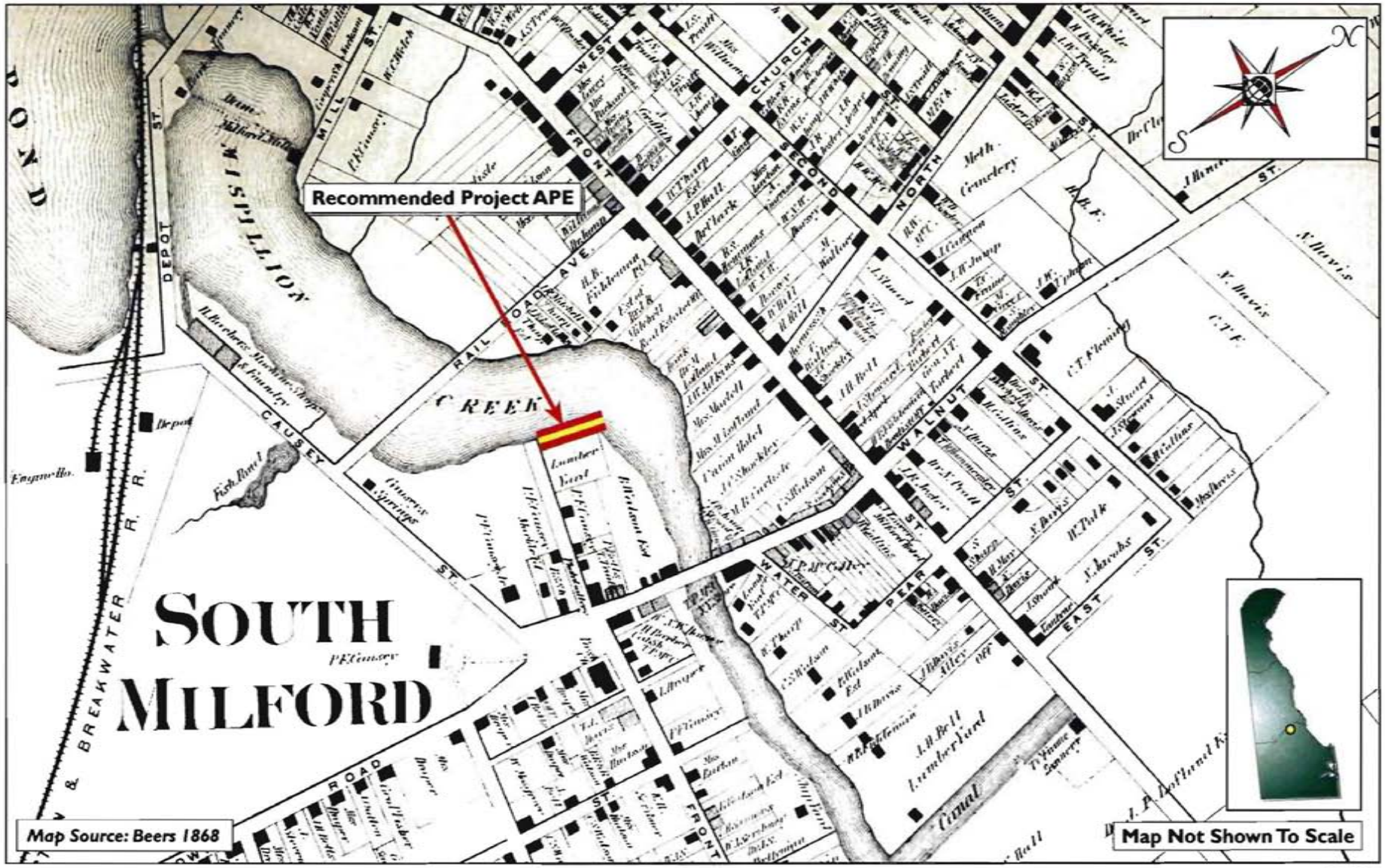
Figure 5
1868 Beers Map of Milford
Mispillion River Greenway Path (Phase XII)
Milford, Sussex County, Delaware



The D. Reise Fruit Canner & Evaporator Company packaged fruits and vegetables throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century (Sanborn 1885, 1897) (Figures 6 and 7). By 1904, the land tenant changed to the Draper & Hirsch Fruit Canners and remained so until around 1930, when it became the Draper Company, Inc./Brakeys & Company, Inc. (Sanborn 1904, 1930) (Figures 8 and 9). This factory operated until the mid-twentieth century and housed several large buildings within its complex (Sanborn 1943) (Figure 10).

The recommended project APE exhibits several types of structures documented by the Delaware Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. The Southwest Front Street Bridge (K-5681), a two-span steel stringer bridge supported by reinforced concrete abutments and a center pier, resides at the western edge of the recommended APE's southern terminus (Photograph 4). The Milford Bus Center (S-1118), located approximately 9.1 meters (30.0 ft) to the east of the recommended APE, once occupied a small streetside portion of the Draper cannery factory building, but was demolished in the last quarter of the twentieth century and replaced with the existing parking lot facility. Located 61.0 meters (200.0 ft) east of the recommended APE, the Draper and Company Store and Apartment Building (S-1119), part of the cannery complex, was renovated during the last quarter of the twentieth century and converted into office facilities for state and commercial businesses (Photograph 5).

The south side of Southwest Front Street across from the southern terminus of the recommended project APE exhibits several architecturally and historically sensitive buildings as well. Several mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century brick and frame commercial structures line the south side of Southwest Front Street. The Old Fire House, located on the southeast corner of Church Avenue and Southwest Front Street, is a *National Register*-listed structure within the recommended APE viewshed (*National Register of Historic Places* 1983). None of these structures are included in the Victorian South Milford Historic District.

In summary, the recommended project APE is located adjacent to, but outside of, the Victorian South Milford Historic District, a *National Register*-listed site. No known archaeological sites exist within the recommended project APE.

Figure 6
Sanborn Map of Milford, 1885

Mispillion River Greenway Path (Phase XII)
Milford, Sussex County, Delaware

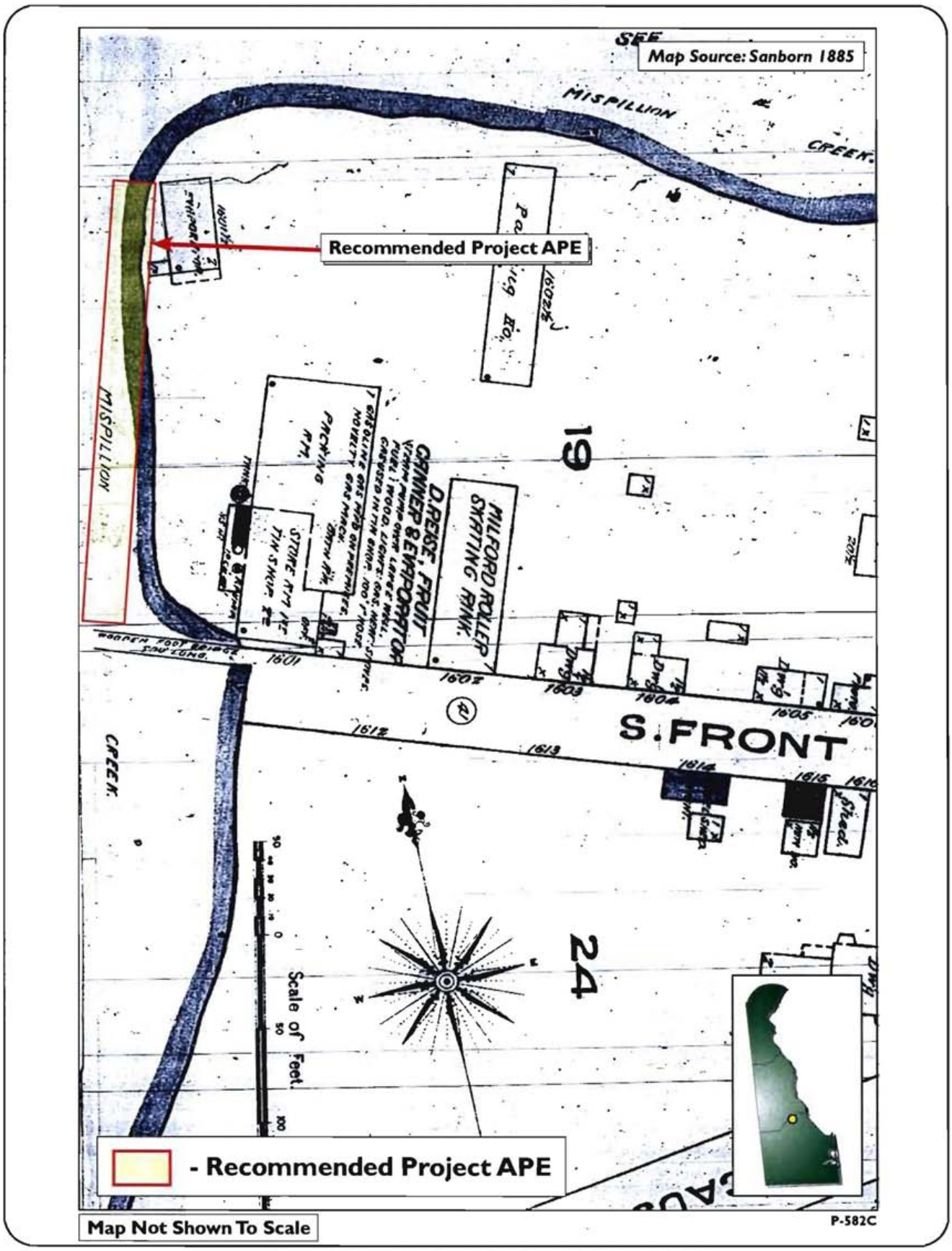


Figure 7
Sanborn Map of Milford, 1897

Mispillion River Greenway Path (Phase XII)
Milford, Sussex County, Delaware

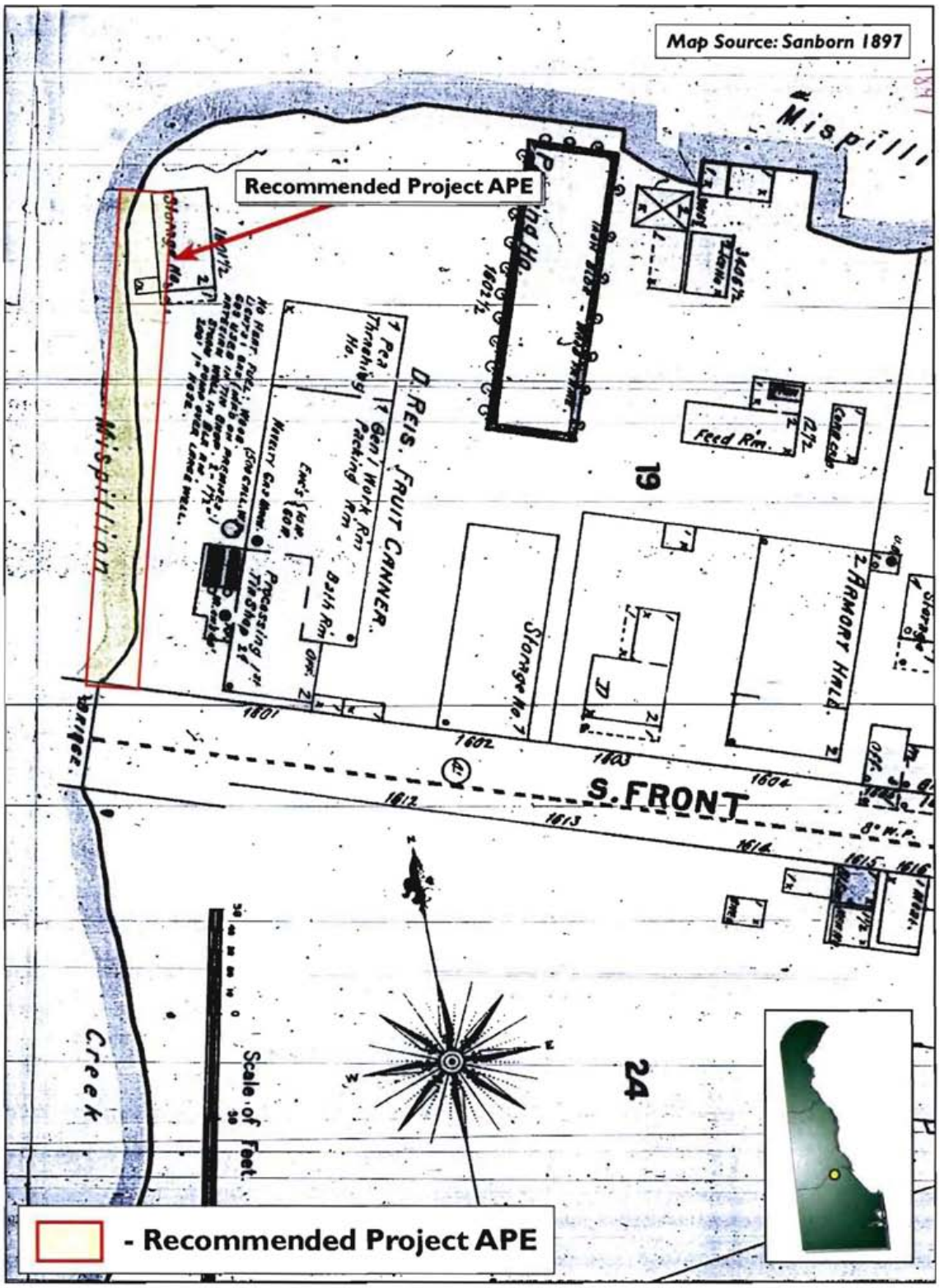


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Figure 8
Sanborn Map of Milford, 1904
Mispillion River Greenway Path (Phase XII)
Milford, Sussex County, Delaware

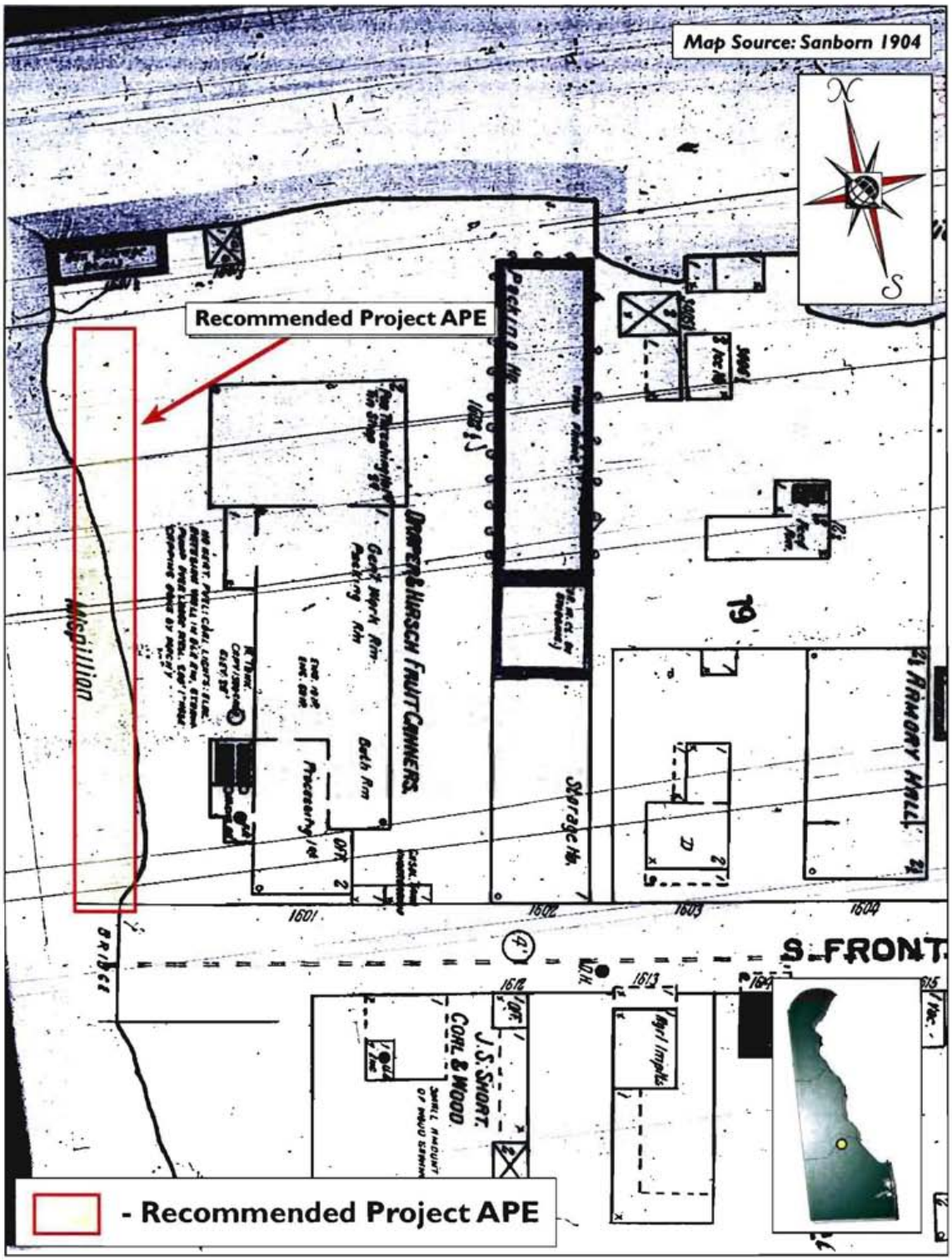

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Figure 9
Sanborn Map of Milford, 1930
Mispillion River Greenway Path (Phase XII)
Milford, Sussex County, Delaware

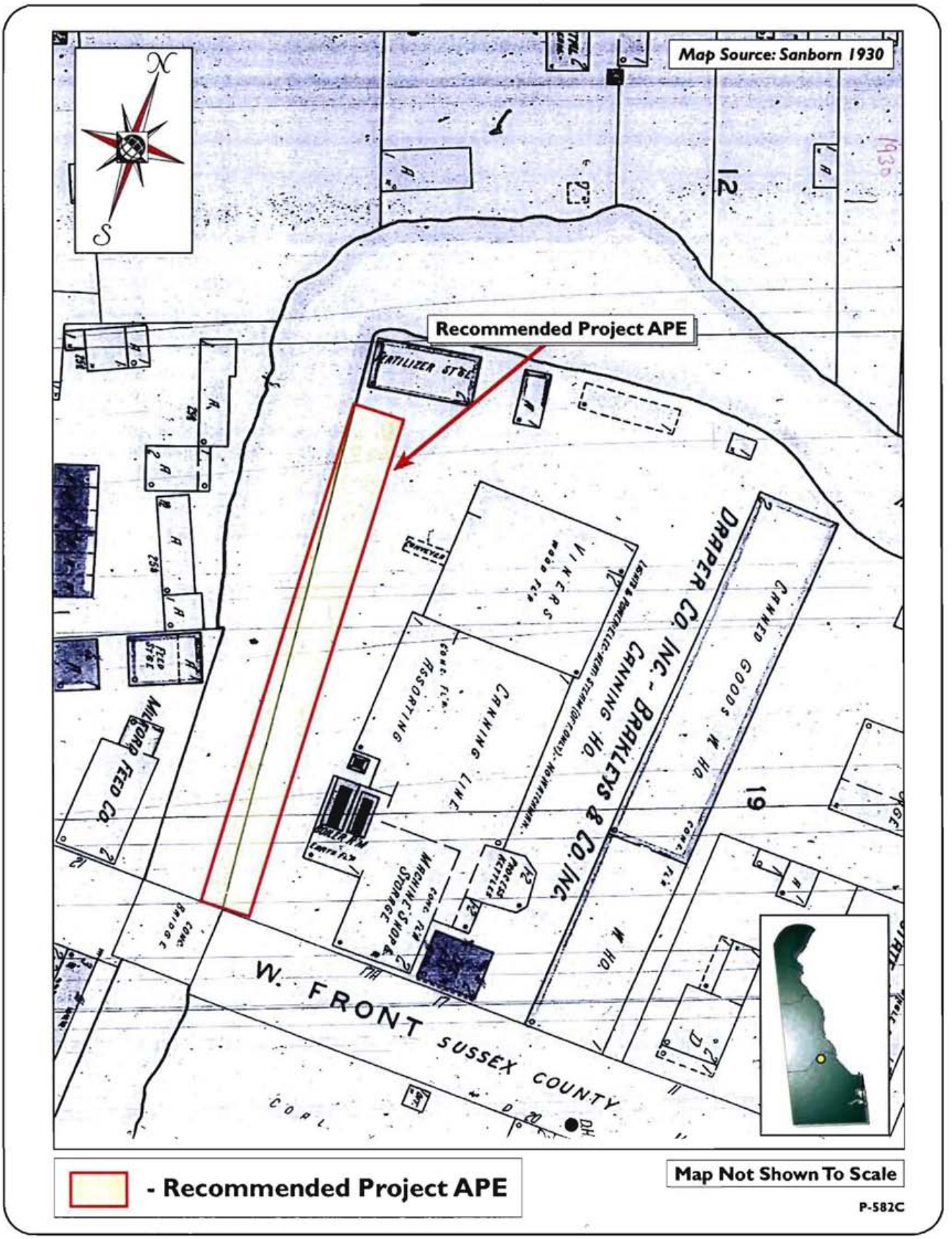
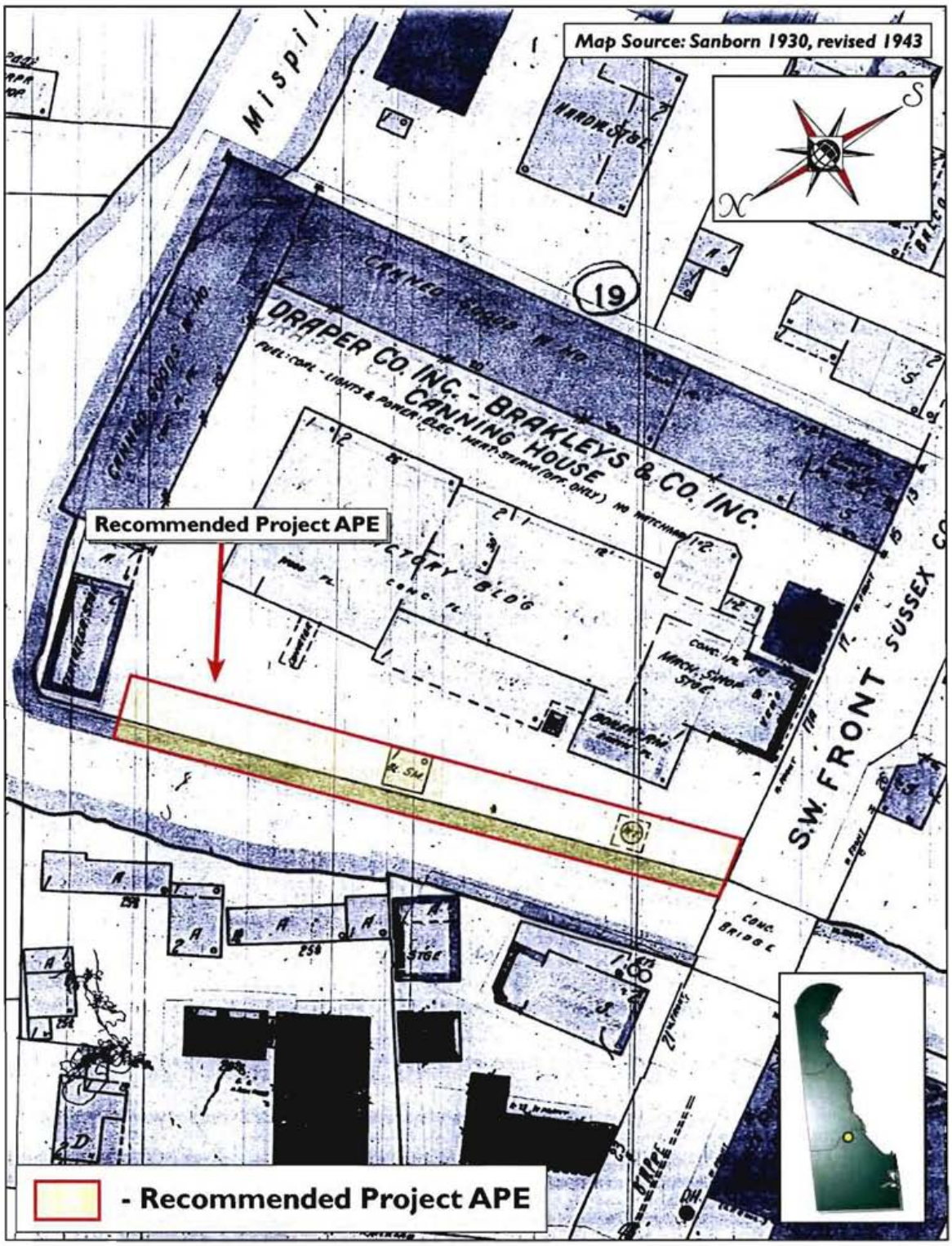


Figure 10
Sanborn Map of Milford, 1943
Mispillion River Greenway Path (Phase XII)
Milford, Sussex County, Delaware



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Photograph 4: Southwest Front Street Bridge (K-5681), view looking northwest (September 2001).

Photograph 5: Draper and Company Store and Apartment Building (S-1119), view looking northeast (September 2001).

A selection of mid-nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century brick and frame structures representative of the commercial growth of downtown Milford's history surrounds the Southwest Front Street corridor and proposed project APE. These resources are not included in the Victorian South Milford Historic District. Historic resources over 50 years of age that have been surveyed or evaluated for this report are adjacent to the recommended project APE.