

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Skelly and Loy, Inc. conducted a preliminary Phase I archaeological survey of the proposed YMCA Connector Road in Pencader Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware (Figures 1 and 2). The Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the project consisted of a 400.0 m (1,312.3 ft) long by 20.0-90.0 m (65.6-295.3 ft) wide area (2.8 ha, or 6.9 ac) within which a 15.0 m (49.2 ft) wide road will be placed. Final design had not been completed prior to the survey, and the preliminary survey was completed in October 2002 to provide planning-level data.

The YMCA Connector Road will be a new location road that will serve to connect a proposed YMCA and the residential community on the western terminus of the project to the Keene Elementary School and the State Police Troop 2 Station on the eastern terminus of the project. The project area is currently a combination of fallow agricultural fields, low wet areas, and bramble-covered areas.

No previously recorded archaeological sites are present in the APE. No properties eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are present in the APE. The existing road on the eastern end of the project and the Keene School were subject to previous cultural resource studies (Bowen *et al.* 2001; Parsons Engineering Science, Inc. 1999). Cultural resource studies were also conducted for the nearby Route 40 corridor (Espenshade and Sams 2002; Kuncio and Hyland 2002) and State Route (S.R.) 896 corridor (Catts and Custer 1990; Hoseth *et al.* 1994; Lothrop *et al.* 1987; Petraglia and Knepper 1995).

The October 2002 preliminary survey included the excavation of 31 shovel test pits (STPs) at 15.0 m (49.2 ft) intervals. A single item of nineteenth century field trash and a twentieth century farm site (the Norman George Farm site) were discovered. The Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) forms are presented in Appendix A. There are presently insufficient data to support a NRHP recommendation for the Norman George Farm site. Once final design has been completed, the need for additional Phase I survey and evaluation of the Norman George Farm site will be discussed with the State of Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

2.0 METHODS

2.1 Background Research

The APE falls within the area covered during the background research for the nearby Route 40 project by Skelly and Loy, Inc. (Espenshade and Sams 2002; Kuncio and Hyland 2002). During that project, the archaeological site files and historic resource files at the SHPO were examined. In addition, relevant previous research and state historic contexts were reviewed (e.g., Custer 1986; Custer and De Santis 1986; De Cunzo and Catts 1990; De Cunzo and Garcia 1992). Historic maps were examined at the SHPO, the Delaware State Archives in Dover, and the University of Delaware Library in Newark.

2.2 Field Survey

The field survey utilized screened STPs at 15.0 m (49.2 ft) intervals. Twenty-seven STPs were placed on the originally proposed centerline. It is likely that curves will be added to the road design to facilitate traffic calming, and there may be need for additional Phase I survey after completion of the final design.

The STPs measured 50.0 x 50.0 cm (19.7 x 19.7 in), and were excavated to culturally sterile subsoil. All soil was screened through 0.64 cm (0.25 in) mesh. Notes were made on the soil stratigraphy and artifact content of each test.

2.3 Site Delineation

During the excavation of STPs along the original centerline, one archaeological site was identified. The APE was broadly defined in the site vicinity to allow design of curves for traffic calming. A very basic site delineation effort was undertaken to determine if the site continued to both the northern and southern edges of the APE. Four additional STPs were excavated at 15.0 m (49.2 ft) intervals along the E325 line. More complete delineation may be necessary once the final design is complete.

2.4 Site-Specific Archival Research

The history of the Norman George Farm site was delineated through an examination of historic maps and archival resources. The examined maps included Baist (1893), United States Geological Survey (USGS 1904, 1953, 1993), and the State Highway Department (1922, 1935). The State Highway Department maps provided historical ownership names, and the other maps were useful only for indicating the presence/absence of the farm. The 1962 aerial photography from the *Soil Survey of New Castle County, Delaware* (Matthews and Lavoie 1970) was also examined to determine the buildings present at that time.

Deed records were examined at the New Castle County Courthouse to construct a chain-of-title back to 1867. Tax records were examined at the Delaware State Archives in Dover. The ca. 1970 appraisal records were examined at DelDOT headquarters in Dover, and excerpts are presented in Appendix B. The 1880 population census was examined on the web site of the Church of Latter Day Saints (Intellectual Reserve, Inc. 2002).

2.5 Site-Specific Oral History

The names of two prior landowners were provided by the Project Engineer at Whitman, Requardt and Associates, LLP. A search of the local white pages revealed that relatives of both owners were still living in the state. Informal telephone interviews were held with George H. Biederman, Jr., whose father and mother owned the site from 1951-1970, and with Lewis M. Hagerty, who owned the site from ca. 1940-1951. Each informant was asked about site layout, structures formerly present, and farm function. They were also asked if they possessed any historic photographs of the farm.