

I. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

GAI Consultants, Inc. (GAI) of Monroeville, Pennsylvania, conducted an historic architectural survey and National Register evaluation in connection with the proposed reconstruction and replacement of Bridge 599 on Benge Road (Route 253) near Yorklyn in New Castle County, Delaware. GAI conducted the architectural survey and National Register evaluation between October and November 2000 for the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). This report presents the objectives, methods, and findings of GAI's architectural survey and National Register evaluation of Bridge 599.

The project area encompasses a portion of Benge Road (Route 253), just west of Yorklyn in northern New Castle County, south of the Pennsylvania state line (Figure 1). Bridge 599 is approximately 500 yards south-southwest of the intersection of Benge Road and SR 82. Bridge 599 crosses at right angles to a small millrace just north of Red Clay Creek. The millrace is owned and maintained by the National Vulcanized Fiber (NVF) Company, whose paper mills are located adjacent to Benge Road, northeast of Bridge 599.

Bridge 599 is a single-lane bridge measuring approximately 17'-8" long and 14'-6" wide which carries north-south traffic along Benge Road (Route 253) over the NVF millrace. Built circa 1932, Bridge 599 is no longer adequate for the level and volume of traffic on Benge Road. Due to the age of the bridge and its inferior substructure, Bridge 599 has inherited several deteriorating conditions that now call for the replacement of the entire structure. DelDOT is proposing total replacement of the bridge, with very little if any of the current structure used in the proposed reconstruction. It is expected that curbing, abutment repair, or some approach work will also be necessary.

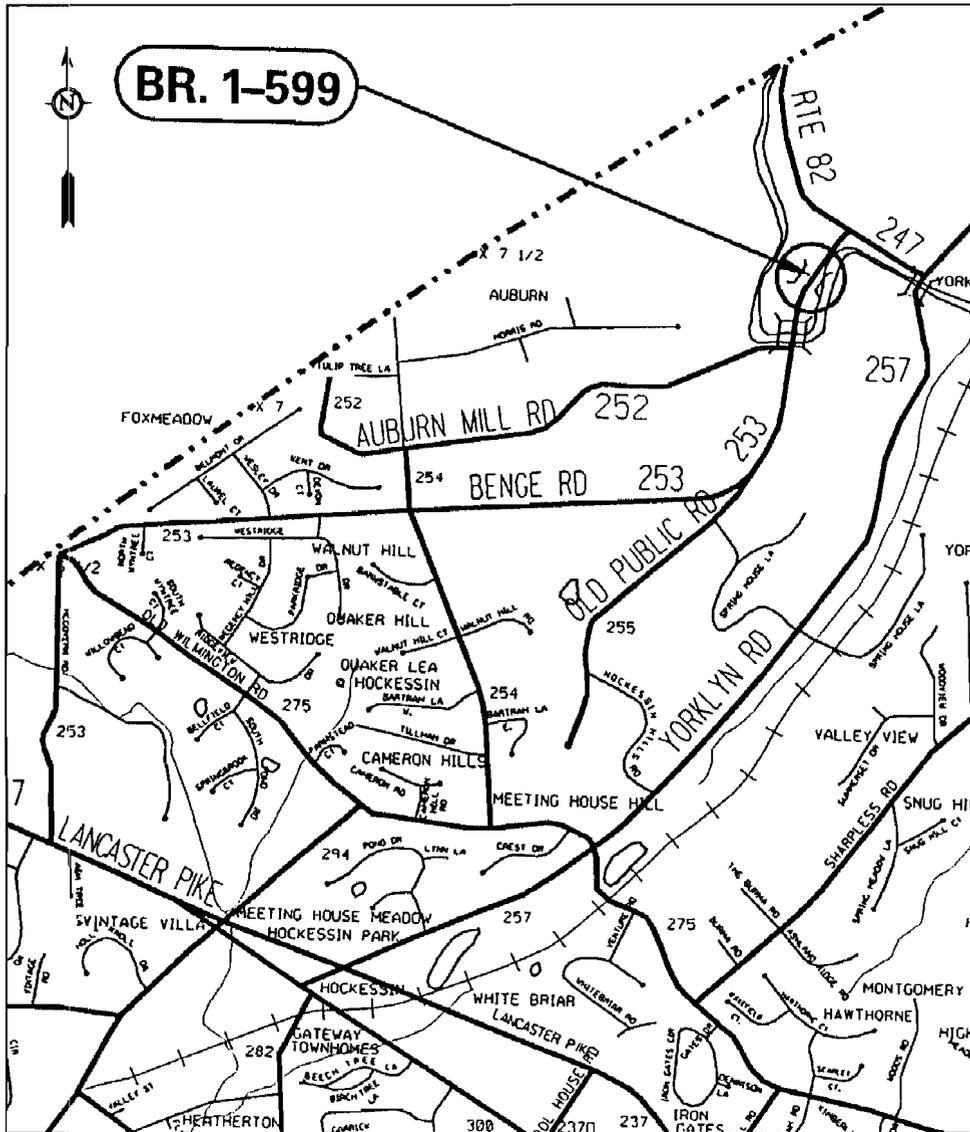


Figure 1

Location of the Bridge 599 Project, Bengie Road (Route 253), New Castle County