

3.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Research objectives for this project were to identify above-ground historic resources forty-five years of age or older in the Area of Potential Effect; develop an appropriate historic context, research design and evaluation criteria; and apply specific evaluation criteria to identified historic resources. The field survey portion of the project identified architectural resources in the project area that were evaluated for eligibility for listing in the NRHP.

Given the historical reliance of the community on agriculture, it is reasonable to expect a presence of older agricultural property types from the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that demonstrate rural and proto-urban organization, as described in the theme *Industrialization and Early Suburbanization 1880-1940 +/-*. However, given the advanced state of suburbanization in the APE, it is expected that non-agricultural residential and commercial property types will be the most prevalent in the APE. The project area's location along US Route 13, as well as the historic pattern of local and regional growth, led to an expectation that a variety of property types relating to the *World War I and Suburbanization Period 1940-1960 +/-*, would be found along this stretch of US Route 13.

Thus, the research design for this project focused on an analysis of the DuPont Highway (US Route 13) and property types relating to both Commercial Roadside Architecture, and the 1940-1960 Suburbanization Periods. There are several established contexts and secondary scholarly studies that are useful in identifying and evaluating property types related to the *Urbanization and Early Suburbanization* and *World War II and Suburbanization Periods*. Background information regarding the theme of *Urbanization and Early Suburbanization* in the Upper Peninsula is found in the statewide *Historic Context Master Reference and Summary* (Herman et al. 1989) and the *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* (Ames et al. 1989). Information on regional suburbanization patterns was found in *Suburbanization in the Vicinity of Wilmington, Delaware, 1880-1950 +/-* (Chase et al. 1992) and the *National Register Context and Guidelines for Evaluating America's Historic Suburbs* (Ames et al. 2002). These two contexts provide specific information on the chronological development of associated property types as well as specific evaluation criteria for residential property types associated with regional and national suburbanization in the early twentieth century. A context that provided information on the development of commercial suburban roadside architecture in the early to mid-twentieth century was *Facilities for Motorists, 1900-1940 Historic Context Study and Property Type Analysis*.

In addition to the descriptions and evaluation criteria provided by the above contexts, several standard texts were used to aid in the identification and evaluation of associated property types. These resources include: *The Gas Station in America, The Motel in America, Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age* by Jakle et al. (1997); *American Signs: Form and Meaning on Route 66* by Lisa Mahar (2002); *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* by Gwendolyn Wright (1981), *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester (1997); and *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* by Chester Liebs (1985). These resources combined with primary sources located in local archives provided the information needed to make informed evaluations of significance.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology utilized for the survey of the US Route 13 sidewalk improvements project APE was a combination of field survey and research of primary and secondary source materials. Before any field work or research was initiated, URS architectural historians met with representatives from DelDOT’s Environmental Studies Section and the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to determine the Area of Potential Effect (APE). The APE is defined as the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. The APE is influenced by the scale and nature of an undertaking and may be different for different kinds of effects caused by the undertaking (36 CFR 800.16(d)).

Prior to conducting a field survey of the project area, Nathaniel Delesline of DelDOT’s Environmental Studies section visited the Delaware SHPO in Dover for the purpose of reviewing the SHPO’s historic building inventory file to identify any properties that had previously been surveyed, listed in, or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or had been recorded at any level for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) or Historic American Engineering Record (HAER). None of the buildings within the APE has been previously surveyed.

There are two previously surveyed archeological resources within the general vicinity of the project area, although they are not located within the APE. These archeological sites are listed in Table 2.

Table 2—Previously Surveyed Archeological Sites in the Vicinity of the US Route 13 Sidewalks Improvement Project, Dover, DE

CRS Number	Name	Location
K-457	State College Site	North Shore of Silver Lake, near US Route 13
K-460	Everett Site	Silver lake and Lake Gardens Housing Development

Before completing Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) forms, URS architectural historians Shelby Spillers and Heather Yost verified the age of the properties in the APE that appeared to be fifty years of age or older with building permit records at the Dover Office of Building Permits. After ages were confirmed, CRS forms were completed for each building in the APE that was at least fifty years of age or would be fifty years of age within the next three years. Eleven properties meeting the minimum age requirement were identified and surveyed. For each surveyed property, a Property Identification form (CRS-1), a Main Building form (CRS-2), Map form (CRS-9), and Photographic Inventory form (CRS-12) were prepared. Additional forms such as Secondary Building forms (CRS-3) and Object forms (CRS-7) were completed as needed. Determination of Eligibility (DOE) forms were to be prepared for those properties that appeared to meet at least one of the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. Because no properties within the APE were ultimately recommended NRHP-eligible, no DOE forms were prepared as a part of this survey.

In an effort to provide a contextual history of the project area, including the social and economic evolution of U.S. Route 13 (DuPont Highway) through the project area, several local and regional repositories were utilized for general and specific research. These include the Delaware State Archives, Delaware State Historic Preservation Office, Kent County Recorder of Deeds Office, the Historical Society of Delaware, Dover Office of Building Permits, the Center for Historic Architecture and Design, and the University of Delaware Morris Library. In addition to the contextual aids discussed earlier, research sources included secondary histories of Dover, Kent County, and Delaware, historic maps and atlases of the project area, and historic photographs and images.

3.3 EXPECTED RESULTS

Research revealed that there were no architectural resources listed in the NRHP and no previously surveyed resources. Research also revealed that this area of Kent County was originally outside of the Dover town limits and was primarily agricultural in use and appearance for much of its history. Nineteenth-century maps and atlases showed the project area contained several farms as well as gristmills located at Silver Lake. The existence of extant agricultural complexes and buildings in the project area is unlikely, given the suburbanization of the area during the early twentieth century and resulting change in land use. As property values increased with suburbanization, agricultural holdings are expected to decrease in size and eventually be subdivided out of existence. The suburbanization trend, along with the development of US Route 13 as a commercial corridor in Dover during the mid twentieth century and continuing into the present, means that property types representing these two themes from this period will be prevalent in the project area today. The property types associated with suburbanization and commercial roadside architecture will be evaluated according to the NRHP Criteria and standards of integrity relevant to these property types.

3.4 SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TYPES IN THE APE AND THEIR EVALUATION CRITERIA

Several suburban residential property types are found in the US Route 13 Sidewalk Improvement Project APE. The development of these suburban property types along US Route 13 is associated with transportation improvements along this corridor, as well as the population expansion of Dover itself during the “Urbanization and Early Suburbanization” and “World War II and Suburbanization” periods.

3.4.1 Evaluation Criteria and Integrity

Suburban residential housing types are evaluated according to the NRHP Criteria. In order to be considered eligible for the NRHP, these property types must also retain integrity and important character-defining features as related to location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, association, and feeling. Below are summarized integrity criteria for suburban residential property types in the “Urbanization and Early Suburbanization” and “World War II and Suburbanization” periods.

- Location-defined by location to transportation and periphery of urban areas;

- Design-a large subdivided parcel, housing as single family detached dwellings, planned variation of house types, self-contained interior road system, park-like landscaping;
- Setting-open, low-density, park-like appearance;
- Materials-buildings must maintain key exterior materials from the time they were built;
- Workmanship-reflected in the attention to detail in the infrastructure of the subdivision;
- Feeling-later automobile suburbs show lower density, more architectural uniformity, and features reflecting the presence of the automobile (Ames 40).

Subdivisions considered eligible as historic districts should demonstrate character-defining features, including street patterns and communal spaces which clearly distinguish the settlement from surrounding features or residences. Typically, later subdivisions will have a more curvilinear plan, but with less diversity in architectural style. General design characteristics within the subdivision need to remain intact. The US Route 13 Sidewalks Improvement Project APE does not possess these necessary character defining features of a subdivision and does not comprise a recognizable historic district.

The evaluation of certain residential architectural styles and building types relies on the identification of unique character-defining features. Some residential styles are defined by characteristics of overall form, while others may be recognized through the identification of key materials, setting, or detailing.

3.4.2 Side-Gable Cottage

So plain that it lacks a distinctive name, the side-gable cottage was marketed by builders catalogues between 1915 and 1925. The simplicity and modest expense associated with the type insured that its popularity would be rekindled and the style re-emerged as a frequently built type in the 1940s. It was most often built as a one-story frame building with three bays and clad with clapboard siding. The roof has an average pitch, lacks any exaggerated over-hanging eaves, and is unadorned with dormers. Some versions have a small porch protecting the front door, while other versions have no porch at all. (Chase et al. 48-50)

Evaluation Criteria To be considered NRHP-eligible, a side-gable cottage must be a simple, modest dwelling of one-or one-and-one-half stories and generally three bays. The building should be oriented, as the name suggests, so the roof line runs parallel to the street and the gables are on the sides. If there are dormers into the upper floor, they must be of the simplest style as must any porch used to ornament the front of the dwelling.

3.4.3 Colonial Revival

Popular from circa 1880 to 1955 and referred to at the time as simply the “colonial” house, the style now called Colonial Revival presents a balanced, proportioned, and restrained impression. The early examples of Colonial Revival were rarely historically correct copies of the original, but rather free interpretations with details inspired by colonial precedents. During the first half of the twentieth century, styles shifted toward carefully researched copies with more accurate proportions and details. This was encouraged by new methods of printing that permitted wide dissemination of photographs in books and periodicals. Colonial Revival houses built between

1915 and 1935 reflect this influence by more closely resembling earlier prototypes than did those built earlier or later.

The economic depression of the 1930s, World War II, and changing postwar fashions led to a simplification of the style in the 1940s and 1950s. These later examples are most often side-gabled, with simple stylized door surrounds, cornices, or other details that merely suggest their colonial precedents rather than mimic them.

The most common permutation of the Colonial Revival style was the side-gable, five-bay dwelling that was two or two-and-one-half stories in height. The style can be constructed of any combination of materials such as frame, brick, or stucco. The exterior walls may also be clad in a combination of materials. The fenestration is nearly always symmetrical, with the front door clearly emphasized by a decorative pediment and pilasters, usually of classical design, or by an entry-door porch whose flat or gabled roof is supported by classical pillars. The door maybe further ornamented by a fan light and/or side lights. Traditionally, the clapboard version of the style was painted white, with windows accented by dark green shutters.

Evaluation Criteria To be considered eligible, a Colonial Revival house should present a balanced impression. It should be a two- or two-and-one-half-story, five bay, side-gable dwelling, usually with symmetrical fenestration. While the material may vary, a Colonial Revival dwelling's position may be strengthened if it follows traditional decorating conventions with classically designed ornamentation around the entry door and window shutters.

3.4.4 Minimal Traditional (ca. 1935-1940)

With the economic downturn and the ensuing depression of the 1930s, the population was forced into financial restraint. The Minimal Traditional house was a compromise style which reflects the form of tradition of Eclectic houses (French, Spanish, Italian, Mission, Pueblo Revival, and Mission-style), but lacks their decorative detailing and extravagance. Roof pitches are low or intermediate, rather than steep as in the preceding Tudor style. Eaves are raked and close, rather than over-hanging as in the earlier Bungalow Style.

Evaluation Criteria Evaluating the significance of the Minimal Traditional style necessitates identifying the restrained elements of earlier Eclectic styles. Front facing gables are common, as are prominent chimneys. A large picture window, restrained detailing around a door, windows or a porch, and compact massing are identifiable character-defining features of this style.

3.4.5 Ranch (ca. 1935-1975)

Ranch houses gained popularity during the 1940s to become the dominant style throughout the country during the decades of the 1950s and 1960s. The popularity of "rambling" Ranch houses was made possible by the country's increasing dependence on the automobile. Streetcar suburbs of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries still used relatively compact house forms on small lots because people walked to nearby streetcar lines. As the automobile replaced streetcars and buses as the principal means of personal transportation in the decades following World War II, compact houses could be replaced by sprawling designs on much bigger lots. Never before had it been possible to be so lavish with land, and the rambling form of the Ranch house emphasized this by maximizing façade width.

Evaluation Criteria Character-defining features of this property type include asymmetrical one-story residences with low-pitched roofs and wide overhanging eaves. Three common roof forms are frequently used, with the hipped version being the most common, followed by the cross-gabled and side-gabled examples. Construction is most often stone or brick masonry with some stone trim, or at the least, masonry veneer on one or more elevations. Stone or brick construction extended to the use of patio walls, steps, planters, and patios. Ribbon and large picture windows are common in living areas. Window types included casement, awning, fixed, and French doors. The house often features an attached garage or carport which is an integral feature of the house's horizontal appearance. Partially enclosed courtyards or patios, borrowed from Spanish-style houses, are also a frequent feature.

3.5 COMMERCIAL ROADSIDE PROPERTY TYPES IN THE APE AND THEIR EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation of roadside commercial architecture rests largely upon extant associative properties with automobiles and the roadside landscape. In urban areas and larger towns, properties should reflect the shift of commercial development from Main Street to outlying zones more readily accessible by car and to larger property lots offering sufficient space for customer parking. Eligible properties should be associated with patterns of settlement and development that occurred in response to the automobile. This includes the development of secondary commercial districts along newly constructed state highways, and eating and lodging facilities for tourists in areas not commonly associated with colonial or railroad era travel. They should also embody the architecture of the automobile era. This includes early, traditional designs for service stations, tourist cabins and motels, as well as later streamlined designs, or buildings that exhibit identifiable traits or specific companies that developed or flourished during the automobile era. Properties that exhibit the use of modern construction techniques and materials such as enameled porcelain, stainless steel, aluminum, and glass blocks would qualify as significant.

3.5.1 Restaurants and Diners

Developing from simple "chuck-wagons" in the late nineteenth century, mobile diners took their inspiration from railroad dining cars of the period. Inside, dining-cars (or "diners" as they were called by this time) were divided lengthwise into kitchen and dining areas separated by a counter. *Literary Digest* describes the interior of railroad dining cars as

...shimmering with burnished nickel, quarter-sawed oak, black marbleite, and colored tile. Lined up against the wall, within short reach of the counterman, is the entire operating equipment of the diner: stoves, warming-pans, coffee urns, refrigerator section, storage bins, silver, dishes, and so on. On the other side of the marble counter...are from twelve to twenty-four stools, and back of them, in the newer models, a row of tables for two or four.

By the 1950s, the diner had lost its mobility and had become a staple of roadside architecture. By then it had morphed into a "glittering chrome-and-neon thing of streamlined beauty" located near major roads. This generation of diners is characterized by "chromium curves," with composition

floors, fluorescent lights, and streamlined stools. Now able to expand beyond the size of a railroad-car thanks to prefab addition kits, diners could now seat as many as 120 patrons.

After a decade of relative prosperity, diners began losing ground to emerging fast food chains. In an effort to remain competitive, diner owners decorated their streamlined designs with exaggerated Modern trappings such as soaring canopies, and then abandoned the vehicular look altogether. It was during the late 1950s and early 1960s that diners began to take their current shape: “large, sprawling, single-story rectangular structures festooned with everything from classical columns and plastic mansards to wrought-iron trellises and imitation stone cladding” (Liebs 1985: 221). The interior had expanded to make room for larger tables and kitchens to accommodate suburban families.

Evaluation Criteria Because diners as a property type have undergone numerous transformations in appearance, they should be evaluated according to date-specific features, such as the use of metal, streamlined modern features, signage, roofline, and fenestration. As a roadside property type, they must also possess such features as orientation to a major roadway, prominent parking, directional signage, and an overall indication that the diner was to be accessed by automobile, rather than by pedestrians.

3.5.2 Strip Shopping Centers

By the 1920s, automobile use had expanded beyond the capacities of traditional downtown areas. Parking was scarce and roads were congested. Motorists also demanded more auto-support facilities such as gas stations, auto showrooms, and repair shops. At first, downtown businesses tried to accommodate the growing population of motor cars by demolishing structures to provide parking and petitioning the government to widen roads and install traffic control signals.

However, as early as the 1890s, suburban fringe developments began to appear in less congested areas along trolley lines and new roads. Downtown shop owners realized that they could set up business in a rented store space in one of the single-story commercial buildings that proliferated along these new transportation avenues. Known as “taxpayer strips” because builders assumed that more concentrated urban settlement spreading out from the city center would eventually make land along the avenues valuable for more intensive development, the buildings were conceived of as interim improvements designed to produce enough revenue to pay the taxes and hold the property for the future (Liebs 1985: 12).

These buildings were designed to be viewed at a high rate of speed. Many existing taxpayer strips still retain their original commercial use. They may often be surrounded by later generations, or retail centers and fast food complexes, but in many suburban towns and cities they may also form contributing elements to historic districts.

Evaluation Criteria While commercial buildings in taxpayer strips take several forms (often relative to surrounding density), they are notable for their location and setting (relationship to the roadside), parking and other automobile-related features, commercial signage, and large expanses of glass that showcase goods and services offered inside. As a roadside property type, they must also possess such features as orientation to a major roadway, prominent parking, directional signage, and an overall indication that the diner was to be accessed by automobile, rather than by pedestrians.

One Part Block

Generally found only in one-story buildings, the design of the one-part commercial block is treated as if it were simply the lower portion of a two-part commercial block and usually appears as a simple box with decorated façade....Because the street façades of these buildings are characteristically narrow and relatively small, the front walls are sometimes extended upward to provide a space for advertising and make the buildings seem larger than they actually are (Lanier and Herman 1997: 233).

Enframed Window Wall

This type of commercial façade is generally seen in one-story or slightly taller buildings and is most often associated with retail stores. Composed of a large glass center section surrounded on three or four sides by a wide, almost continuous border, the front is visually treated as one compositional unit. Border decoration is usually minimal. When multistory buildings of this type occur, they are characterized by very wide front bays. More frequently associated with urban business districts than smaller towns, this type of commercial building began to appear early in the twentieth century and remained popular through the 1940s (Lanier and Herman 1997: 237).

3.6 EVALUATION CRITERIA**Commercial Roadside Property Types**

The evaluation of roadside commercial architecture rests largely upon extant associative properties with automobiles and the roadside landscape. Sites that reflect parking are particularly important.

In urban areas and larger towns, properties should reflect the shift of commercial development from Main Street to outlying zones more readily accessible by car and to larger property lots offering sufficient space for customer parking. LeeDecker et al. note that properties should illustrate commercial activity that occurred in direct response to automobile use and travel. The most significant change effected by the automobile was its incorporation into site plans. Qualifying properties should feature site layouts that facilitate service to customers arriving by car such as driveways or parking lots.

In addition to the National Register Criteria, the LeeDecker context also addresses the issues of integrity for roadside architecture. In particular, property types should maintain an association, location, and setting consistent with historical use:

The association with the automobile as seen in a property's location and setting are intrinsically important to roadside architecture. The property should be located with direct access to an improved road in a setting that incorporates the automobile as evidenced by a drive court and/or on-premises parking. Since later twentieth-century development often encroached upon early examples of roadside architecture, a setting originally rural or exurban in character may now be the center of a suburb or commercial strip. While this does reflect a change in the property's setting, it does not have a negative impact on the integrity of the property and perhaps even enhances it. Similarly, road alignments often were, and continue to be, altered over time. A property that was

once sited on a principal thoroughfare may now be located a distance from the main flow of traffic or may have been removed to accommodate the road expansion.

The original design of the property should be visible in the plan and form of the building(s) and the property's original materials should be intact. This includes framing, exterior wall materials, the rhythm and size of openings, and the details and quality of workmanship that went into the original construction. Similarly, building interiors should retain original elements, including fixtures, tile work, woodwork, and the original plan should be unaltered. The removal of original details and the application of new materials weaken the property's integrity of materials and workmanship. If the original elements remain intact below the new materials, the damage to a property's integrity is less severe. Likewise, structural additions and removals weaken a property's integrity of design. Only if alterations were made prior to [1950] can they be considered historic. Alterations to interior plans are acceptable if the changes are reversible and if the original lay-out of the building can still be understood. The property's original function (restaurant, service station, auto show room, and motel) should be identifiable, as should the company if the property belonged to an architecturally standardized chain (such as Texaco or Gulf gas station or a Howard Johnson restaurant).

The historic feeling of a property is extremely subjective to characterize and more accurately reflects an amalgamation of the aforementioned characteristics in varying degrees. While a still-functioning 1940 service station may retain its setting and plan, it may have been significantly remodeled and expanded so that its original appearance (including design, materials, and workmanship) is no longer discernible. On the other hand, the exterior sheathing of a court of tourist cabins may have been replaced, either to update the property's appearance or to transform the individual units into a "single building" of connected motel units. While the exterior materials and design have been altered, the individual units remain intact below the new sheathing and the property could still be considered eligible.

Accordingly, it is vital that commercial roadside architecture be closely examined according to association and feeling. It is critical that historic roadside architecture convey information related to its significance. A service station or similar building that acts specifically as a marketing tool needs to maintain exterior features, which help the observer to identify it as a particular "brand" or like corporate affiliation. Alternatively, properties which also consist of multiple buildings within a roadside setting may be able to convey their association despite some alteration in materials. However, setting and location to the roadside landscape are critical features in conveying an understanding of historic properties.