

6.0 VIEWS OF THE
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6.1 Comments of the DE and MD SHPOs

Comments from the DE SHPO were addressed on a number of issues including the alternatives, eligibility of resources in the APE, the National Register boundaries of previously listed resources, and the potential effects on historic properties.

The DE SHPO provided comments on the Alternatives Retained for Detailed Studies on October 7, 2005 (Appendix A). The DE SHPO noted that the Green Alternatives (North and South) were among several alternatives that were deemed generally “satisfactory” (“alternatives which have overall fewer potential effects”) to carry forward for further analysis but recommended consideration of “additional designs that would avoid or minimize the effects on historic buildings, in particular”. About the Green Alternatives specifically, the DE SHPO stated: “When compared with the data on all of the other alternatives, the Green Alternatives generally fall in the middle of the range of potential effects on historic properties”. The comments also noted the Green Alternatives posed relatively high potential effects on historic buildings and areas with prehistoric archaeological potential.

Comments were received from the DE SHPO with regards to the DEIS on February 14, 2007 (Appendix A). As part of their comments, the DE SHPO indicated that the Preferred Alternative will affect a number of National Register-listed or eligible properties. In terms of archaeology, the Preferred Alternative is more likely to affect pre-contact sites but less likely to affect historic period sites. The DE SHPO also noted that all options in regards to the Armstrong Corner Interchange will adversely affect the S. Holton Farm (CRS No. N00107) and the Armstrong-Walker House (CRS No. N05146). The SHPO also noted that the Preferred Alternative’s Boyd’s Corner Road/Ratledge Road Crossing (Option 4B Modified) would bring the proposed improvement closer to the Lovett Farm (CRS No. N05132) and the T. J. Houston Farm (CRS No. N05131), as well as possibly affect areas with higher archaeological potential. The DE SHPO was open to further discussion of Option 4B Modified and requested further consideration on the purpose, need, and design of the proposed Spur Road. No other comments regarding historic properties impacts were received from New Castle County and other interested parties with regards to the Preferred Alternative.

DelDOT has taken the views of the DE SHPO into consideration during the design process. DelDOT regards the Spur Road as an integral part of the project and will continue to evaluate ways to mitigate unavoidable impacts to resources during the engineering design phase of the project. For example, landscape screening may be developed during final design for resources within view of the Spur Road, such as the Armstrong-Walker House (CRS No. 05146).

DE SHPO and DelDOT staff worked in close coordination regarding the eligibility determinations and potential effects of the Preferred Alternative. Field views to discuss potential effects to resources in the APE for the Green North Alternative were conducted by DelDOT, DE SHPO, RK&K, and A.D. Marble & Company staff on July 18, 2006, and February 5, 2007.

Since the undertaking will extend approximately 2,600 feet into Maryland in order to enable the widening of the roadway from two lanes to four lanes, DelDOT consulted with the Maryland State Historic Preservation Office (MD SHPO) on the potential effects of the project on historic resources in Maryland. The MD SHPO concurred that the project does not have the potential to effect historic resources as long as the proposed improvements remain within the existing right-of-way (ROW) (Appendix B). As the project design develops, the MD SHPO will participate in future consultation on the phased identification and evaluation of historic properties and will be a signatory of the MOA.

6.2 Comments of the Public

Public comments with regards to a preference for an alternative as well as concerning various elements of the project including the treatment of historic properties were sought throughout the project planning process during the public workshops, during the public hearing, through the project's website, and through interaction with members of the Project Team during community meetings and at the project office. None of the public comments received expressed views on the treatment of historic resources. More detailed comments from the public are included in Section IV of the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Public involvement will be ongoing with future archaeological investigations and implementation of mitigation measures for standing structures.

Meetings have been held between DelDOT staff and the owners of historic properties who were concerned about potential project effects. Visits were made to the Robb family (Weston, CRS No. N00121); the Rhoades family (Choptank, CRS No. N00109); and the Renck family (Fairview, CRS No. N05244). The New Castle County Department of Planning and Land Use (NCC) has been invited to provide comments on the project's potential effects on historic properties although they have not responded to the invitation. Although the Delaware Nation and the Stockbridge-Muncee Community have not indicated intent to participate in the Section 106 consultation process, under the provisions of the MOA, FHWA will advise the Tribes of Native American archaeological sites, investigations, and treatments.