

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**



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This Cultural Resources Evaluation for the Mispillion River Greenway Path project has assessed the cultural resource sensitivity of the recommended APE within the City of Milford, Delaware. The recommended Mispillion River Greenway Path project APE has low potential to contain any undocumented archaeological and architectural resources.

### 5.1 Historic Architecture

The recommended project APE lies adjacent to, but outside of, the Victorian South Milford Historic District, a *National Register*-listed resource. Currently, no structures remain within the recommended APE of the Mispillion River Greenway Path project. Several structures, including the Front Street State Service Center, the Draper and Company Store and Apartment Building (S-1119), and a selection of mid-nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century brick and frame structures along the south side of Southwest Front Street, have been surveyed as part of the 1983 *National Register* nomination for the Historic Resources of Milford, but were not included in the Victorian South Milford Historic District. The Front Street State Service Center and the Draper and Company Store and Apartment Building represent the last buildings associated with the cannery industry of Milford and are potentially eligible for inclusion in the *National Register*. These two structures should be reevaluated based on their historical association with the canning industry of the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The mid-nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century brick and frame structures along the south side of Southwest Front Street possibly are associated with the cannery's rise and growth and should be reevaluated as well.

Despite the number of potentially eligible architectural resources in the recommended project APE, the proposed improvements will not impact these resources. The viewshed of the recommended project APE contains modern visual impacts in the form of aerial utilities, road signs, sidewalks, and other disturbances. In addition, many of the buildings exhibit recent improvements, such as door and window treatments. The southern terminus of the recommended project APE does abut the Southwest Front Street Bridge (K-5681), a surveyed state cultural resource, but the bridge will not be impacted by the proposed improvements. Overall, the historic architectural integrity of the area within the recommended project APE has been severely

compromised with the demolition of the Draper canning facility and the construction of a utility-impacted asphalt parking lot servicing local businesses. No further survey work is recommended within the proposed project APE.

## **5.2 Archaeology**

Construction and demolition activities by previous landowners since the mid-nineteenth century have left little potential for significant cultural resources to exist. Historic maps suggest that the land impacted by recommended project APE is the result of fill deposition in the river dating to the last half of the nineteenth century (Figures 4-7). This suggestion was verified by soil borings performed within the recommended project APE (Matt Spohn, personal communication 2002). As such, the soils have little potential for retaining intact deposits predating the cannery. Periodic demolition and construction activities related to industrial growth on the property disturbed the landscape as the introduction of new buildings churned the soil. Evidence of buried utilities across the recommended project APE indicates that deeper soils likely are disturbed as well. Finally, the cannery property, with the exception of the recommended project APE, was capped with an asphalt parking lot in the last quarter of the twentieth century. It is unlikely that any intact archaeological deposits reside below the recommended project APE or below the current parking lot given the history of reuse of the property. It is our recommendation that no further archaeological investigation is necessary.

In summary, the proposed improvements for the Mispillion River Greenway Path will not impact any archaeological or architectural resources located within the recommended project APE. The project area has undergone extensive landscape changes since the mid-nineteenth century, altering the original character of the streetscape. The Southwest Front Street corridor does retain several late-nineteenth- to early-twentieth-century structures, although their architectural composition has been compromised throughout the years. Visual surface and aboveground elements, such as boardwalk materials, streetlights, and site furnishings should reflect the mid-nineteenth- to mid-twentieth-century temporal association of the project area. In addition, the existing boardwalk network of the Mispillion Greenway Pedestrian and Bicycle Path System contains similar visual elements as proposed in Phase XII. These improvements were designed in keeping with the turn-of-the-century theme of downtown Milford, and these improvement examples should be followed to maintain continuity in the overall project design.