

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Phase I archaeological investigations have been completed in conjunction with the proposed Iron Hill Bikeway project located in Newark, New Castle County, Delaware (Figure 1).

1.1 Purpose and Need

The Iron Hill Bikeway project Phase I archaeological survey was performed at the request of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) in order to identify any and all archaeological resources that might be present within the project Area of Potential Effect (APE) and to preliminarily assess those resources for significance. By accomplishing these goals, compliance with state and federal legislation is assured.

1.2 Project Description

The APE for the proposed bikeway is a linear transect that measures 2.35 km (1.46 mi) long by 3.1 m (10.0 ft) wide (Figure 2: Sheets 1-10; Photographs 1-3). The proposed bikeway will start at the intersection of Old Baltimore Pike and State Route (S.R.) 896, will run north paralleling S.R. 896 to near the I-95 interchange, and then will parallel I-95 west to Welsh Tract Road. The path will generally follow existing contours, and extensive cutting or filling will not be necessary. No parking, storage, or staging areas will be needed for this project.

The APE is located in the Drainage Divide section of the Upper Coastal Plain Physiographic Province. The APE is located on the eastern and northern flanks of Iron Hill, the highest landform in the state. Iron Hill is one of three hills that are considered "inliers of the Piedmont Plateau on the Coastal Plain" (Melson 1969:2). The APE drains east-northeast to the Christina River, which is approximately 500.0 m (1,640.4 ft) from the APE at its closest point. Elevations within the APE range from approximately 32.3 to 52.4 m (106.0 ft to 172.0 ft) above mean sea level (msl). Soil types mapped in the APE include the Watchung and Calvert soils and the Neshaming and Montalto soils (Matthews and Lavoie 1970: Sheet 22). The Watchung and Calvert soils are poorly drained, upland soils that are often eroded. A typical profile is a 20.3 cm (8.0 in) thick Ap horizon of 10YR 4/1 dark gray silt loam over a Bt horizon of 10YR 6/1 gray heavy silty clay loam. The Neshaming and Montalto soils are well drained, residual soils that typically have lost part of their original topsoil. A typical profile has an Ap horizon of 7.5YR 5/6 strong brown heavy silt loam (0-10.9 cm [0-4.3 in]) over a Bt horizon of 5YR 5/6 yellowish red silty clay loam (Matthews and Lavoie 1970:18).

The section of the project APE paralleling S.R. 896 is limited to areas previously disturbed and cut during the S.R. 896 improvements project. The sections near the I-95 interchange and paralleling I-95 are generally wooded sideslopes, with previous disturbance from fiber-optic cable burial, installation of a gas transmission line, and use as a mountain bike/hiking trail.