

The Best of The Nanticoke Heritage Byway

A Tour of Historic Architecture



Center for Historic
Architecture + Design



Prepared by The Center for Historic Architecture and Design at the University of Delaware



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Architecture + Design**

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KEY

☑ = Open to Public Visitation

⊗ = National Register Property (Individual or District)



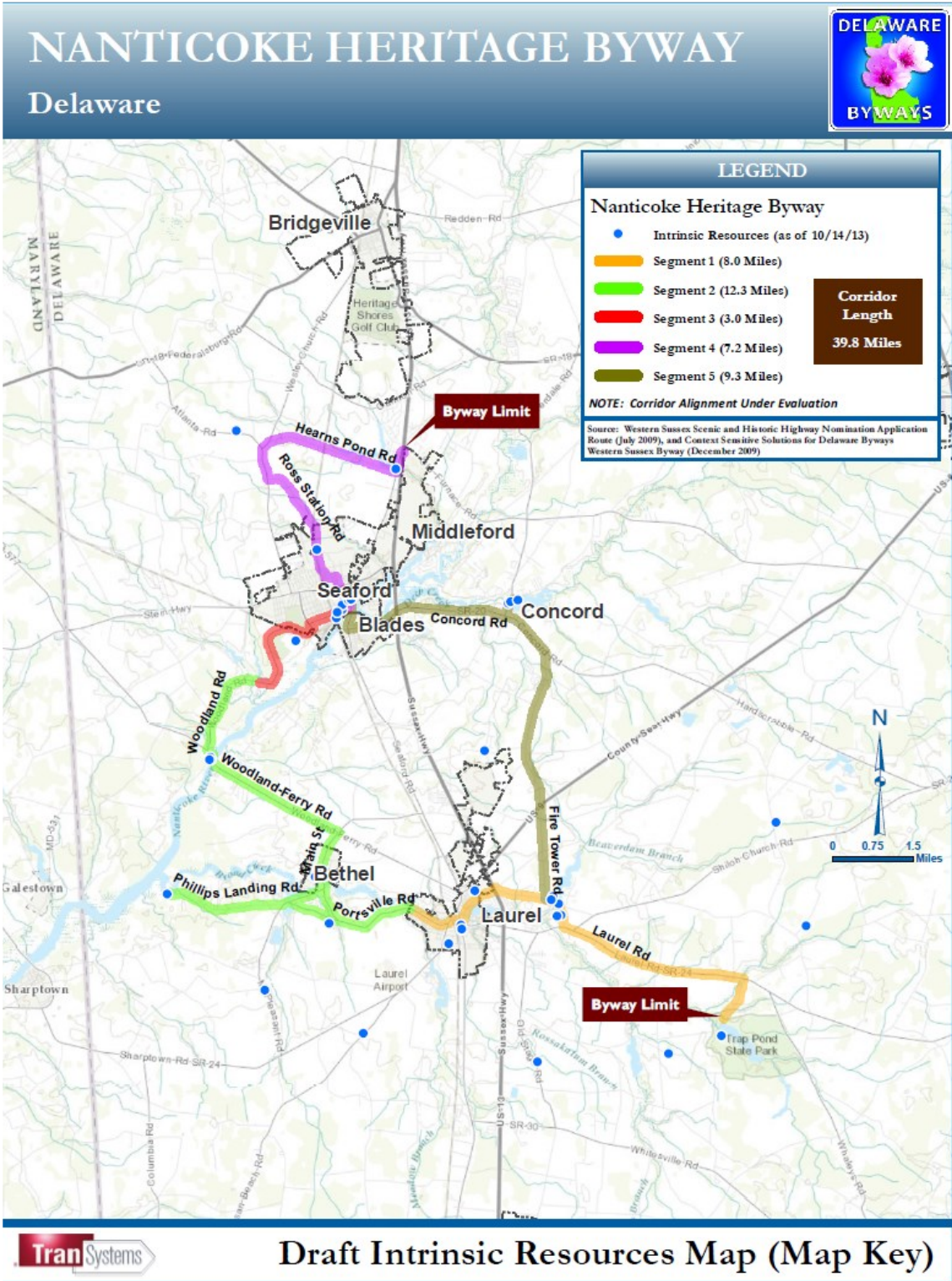
Byway: *noun*

A road or track not following a main route;
A minor road or path.

Buildings and landscapes comprise Delaware's byways and offer visual evidence of a time and place in history. Although each byway is unique in that different historical, cultural, and natural resources are found, they are often linked geographically and by the byway label. An example of a geographically linked byway is the Nanticoke Heritage Byway. This byway winds its way around Seaford, hitting historically important locations in Laurel, Bethel, and Bridgeville. It spans 40 miles through rich agricultural and natural landscapes.

Examining these resources can be done visually and by using a little detective work. The Byways Research Team at The University of Delaware has strived to incorporate architectural descriptions, photographs, and research that conveys the culture these resources helped create or exemplify, to preserve and promote one of Delaware's most valuable assets.

Nanticoke Byway Map



Segment 1: Laurel

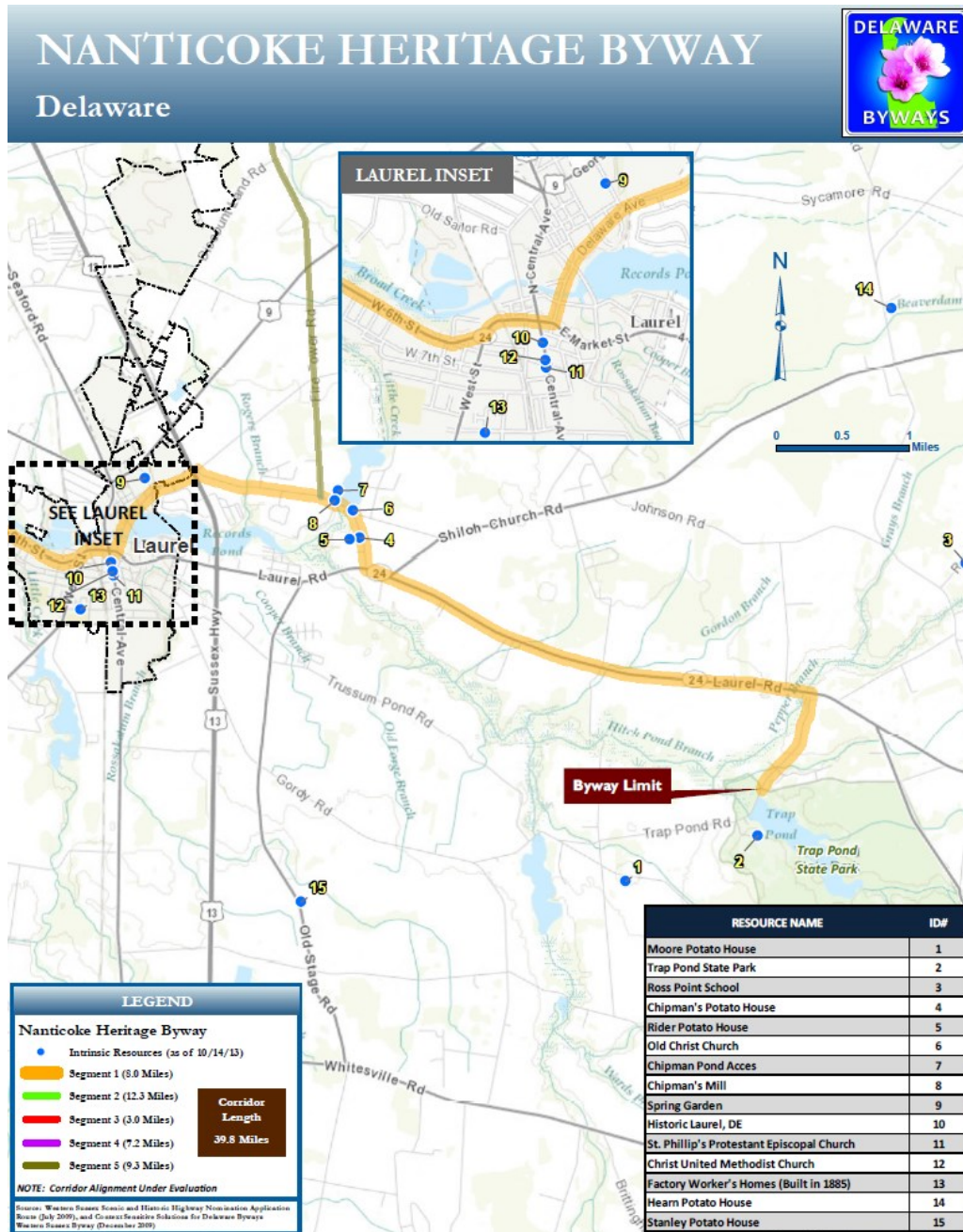


Laurel has a long history, having been founded in 1683. During the 19th century it was one of the wealthiest towns in the State thanks to its economic connection to Seaford and to the Nanticoke River through Broad Creek. Sweet Potatoes was a cash crop in this area of the Delmarva as they flourished and eventually replaced the traditional crops of wheat and corn. The remnants of this agricultural trend can still be seen on the landscape through the many sweet potato storage houses.

Segment 1

Laurel

Map



Draft Intrinsic Resources Map (Segment 1)

Laurel



1. Collins Sweet Potato House ☉

Road 509

Vernacular, c. 1880

One bay, two-and-a-half stories, frame with metal siding; front-gabled tin roof with interior end chimney; central single door; single windows.



2. Christ United Methodist Church



510 South Central Avenue

Gothic Revival, c. 1911

Two stories, six bays, stone; three-story castellated tower with lancet windows and finials; two-story polygonal tower with lancet windows and finial; stone belt courses; open arcade on first floor; three-light rose window on second floor.



3. St. Phillip's Protestant Episcopal Church

600 South Central Avenue

Gothic Revival, c. 1860

Two stories, three bays, brick; front-gabled roof; three-story central tower with pointed roof and finial; brick pilasters; paired paneled arched door; single and paired lancet windows.



4. Cook House

502 Fourth Street

Federal

Two-and-a-half stories, five bays, frame; side-gabled shingle roof with interior brick chimneys at gable ends; full-width porch with hipped shingle roof and fluted Doric column supports; central wood door with transom; double-hung sash windows with wood louvered shutters.



5. E.L. Hitch Sweet Potato House



28046 Dillards Road

Vernacular, c. 1920

One bay, two-and-a-half stories, frame with wood weatherboard; front-gabled shingled roof; two loading doors; double-hung sash windows.



6. Laurel Factory Workers' Homes Streetscape

10th Street

c. 1885

Row of housing provided for the nineteenth century workers at the Marvil Packaging, a basket manufacturer founded in 1860.



7. Laurel Train Station/Heritage Museum

201 Mechanic Street

Colonial Revival, c. 1870

One story, seven bays, Flemish bond brick; hipped shingle roof with overhanging eaves, brackets, and central interior brick chimney; single paneled wood doors with marble sills and transoms; bay window; double-hung sash windows.



8. Old Christ Church ☉

Chipmans Pond Road and Christ Church Road

Georgian, c. 1772

Two-and-a-half stories, two bays, frame with shingles; two paired wood doors; double-hung sash windows with plank shutters.



9. Chipman Sweet Potato House



31236 Christ Church Road

Vernacular, c. 1913

One bay, two-and-a-half stories, frame with wood weatherboard; front-gabled tin roof; three sliding loading doors; single small loading doors.



10. Phillips Sweet Potato House



Road 3

Vernacular, c. 1900

Two-and-a-half stories, one bay; frame with shingles; front-gabled tin roof with interior end chimney; loading doors; single windows.



11. Spring Garden

Delaware Avenue Extended

Georgian/Federal/Gothic Revival, c. 1783

Three stories, seven bays, brick with vinyl siding; side-gabled shingled roof with four interior chimneys; two front-gabled dormers; central single paneled wood door; double-hung sash windows with paneled and louvered shutters; front-gabled addition with pediment, paired glass door, and double-hung sash windows with louvered shutters.



12. Stanley Sweet Potato House



34147 Old Stage Road

Vernacular, c. 1920

Two-and-a-half stories, one bay, frame with wood weatherboard; front-gabled tin roof; sliding door and hinged loading door; lean-to addition.



13. Rider Sweet Potato House ⓘ

34082 Rider Road

Vernacular, c. 1920

Two-and-a-half story, one bay, frame with shingles; front-gabled shingled roof with interior end chimney; sliding entry door; loading window on second floor.



Segment 2: Bethel/Portsville

Bethel is located on the Broad Creek and has a long history that starts with the founding of the town in the late 18th century. During the 1800's it was a bustling community of ship carpenters and sea captains because of its connection to the Nanticoke River which spills into the Chesapeake Bay to the southwest. The historic district here is on the National Register of Historic Places and today it still feels retains a quaint, small town feel that reflects the maritime culture of Delaware. Here you will find many Queen Anne and Italianate style homes, which were popular in this region.

Segment 2

Bethel

Map



1. Bethel Store ☼

7743 Main Street

Colonial Revival, c. 1900

Two-and-a-half stories, three bays, frame with wood weatherboard; front-gabled shingle roof with box cornice; central paired wood door with sidelights and transom; flat-roofed awning with triangular brackets; paired plate glass windows with transoms; double-hung sash windows.



2. Town of Bethel Community House and Graveyard ☼

Main Street

Gothic Revival

Two-and-a-half stories, three bays, frame; front-gabled shingle roof; central wood paneled door with transepts and decorative transom; rose window; double-hung sash window.



3. Sailor's Bethel Methodist Church and Graveyard ☼

7752 Main Avenue

Gothic Revival, c. 1855

Two-and-a-half stories, four bays, frame with clap-board siding; front-gabled shingle roof with central castellated bell tower; central paired paneled wood door with lancet window; rose window; double-hung sash lancet windows.



4. Ship-Carpenter's Houses ☼

Main Street

Colonial Revival, c. 1860

Two-and-a-half stories, four bays, frame; side-gabled shingled roof with interior chimney at gable end; front-gabled dormers; central single wood door; double-hung sash windows with wood paneled shutters.



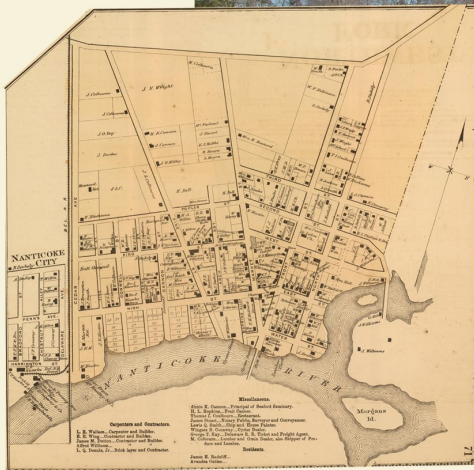
5. Portsville United Methodist Church

31060 Dogwood Lane

Greek Revival

One story, three bays, frame; front-gabled shingle roof with box cornice and pediment with wide trim; central three-story tower with balustrade; central single wood door with transom; double-hung sash windows.

Segments 3,4,& 5: Seaford



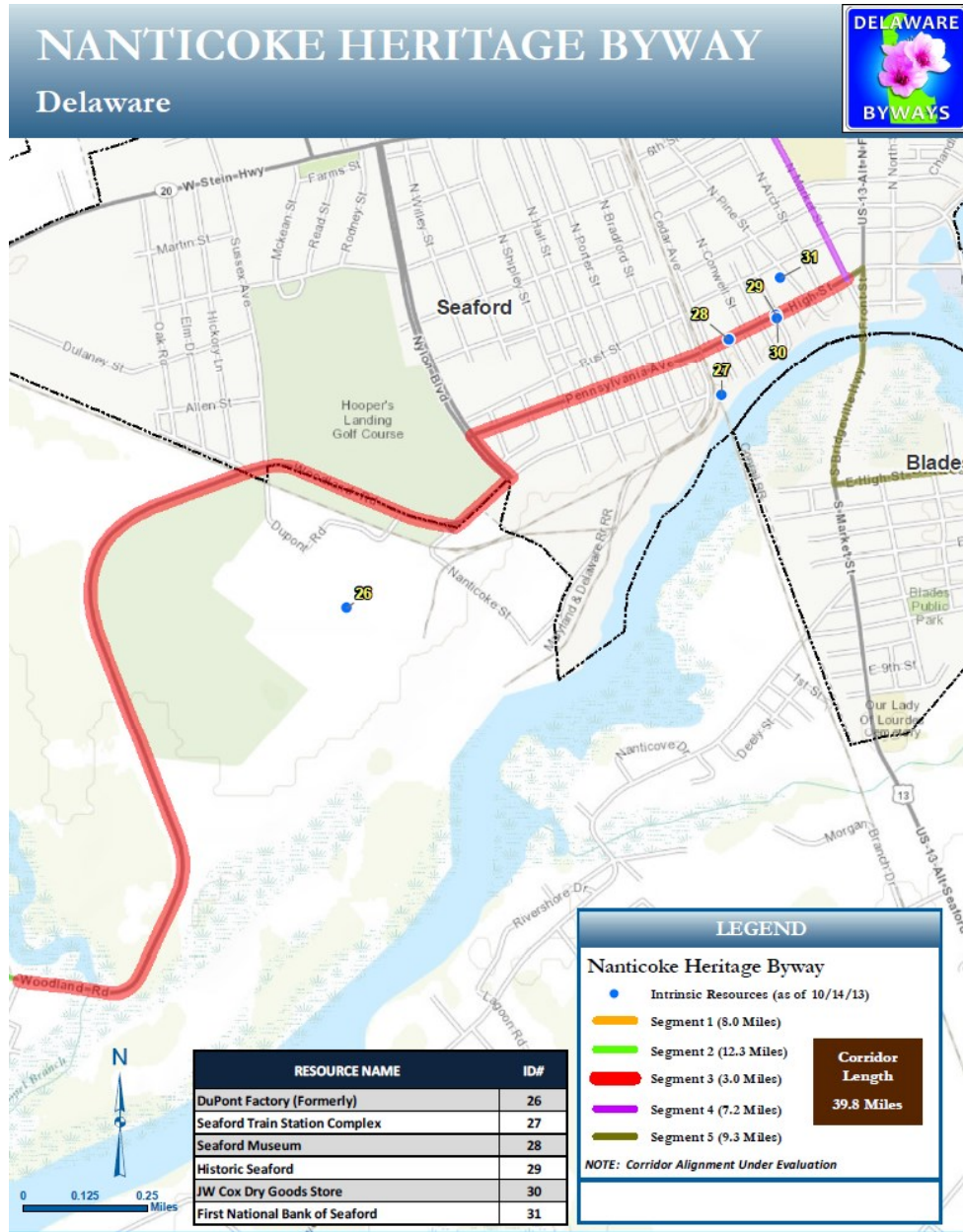
Sitting prominently on the Nanticoke River, Seaford has a history steeped in agriculture. The area was originally tobacco growing land long before the town's charter in 1865. Governor William Henry Harrison Ross resided in Seaford and was integral to the agricultural innovations in the area. Seaford was an economic hub because of its relationship to the Nanticoke River and because of Sussex counties prominence in the broiler chicken, truck crop, and fruit industries. It was also the site of the first Nylon Plant, owned by the DuPont Company, which crowned Seaford the Nylon Capital of the World.

Seaford's economic prestige is still visible through its architecture. The Nylon plant still stands on the edge of town and Governor Ross' Italianate Mansion is a worthy visit. There are also a plethora of other Queen Anne and Italianate, which show the layers of history in this all important area of Sussex County.

Segments 3-5

West Seaford, North Seaford/Bridgeville, East Seaford

Map



Draft Intrinsic Resources Map (Segment 3)



1. DuPont Nylon Factory

25876 DuPont Road

Industrial, c. 1939

Brick, flat roof, steel framed windows; opened its doors for nylon production on December 12, 1939 and was Sussex's County largest employer at the time; produced sixty-four million pairs of nylon stockings in its first year of operation; also known for its development of the textile "Fiber V," which was used extensively in the carpet industry; listed as a National Chemical Landmark in 1995.



2. Seaford Historic Rail Station ⊛

Nanticoke River at Delaware Railroad Bridge

Colonial Revival, c. 1905

One story, seven bays, common bond brick; hipped shingled roof with bracketed overhang; single wood doors; double-hung sash windows



3. First National Bank of Seaford



118 South Pine Street

Italianate, c. 1868

Two-and-a-half stories, five bays, brick; hipped shingle roof with bracketed cornice; shed-roofed dormer; two interior masonry chimneys; central paired wood panel door with transom; double-hung sash windows with wood louvered shutters.



4. Forty and Eight Box Car

591 East Poplar Street

Red, wood frame box car with black metal trim; shield-shaped flags; accessed via modern metal staircase; one of forty-nine box cars given to the United States by France after World War II for their aid during the conflict.



5. Seaford Museum

203 High Street

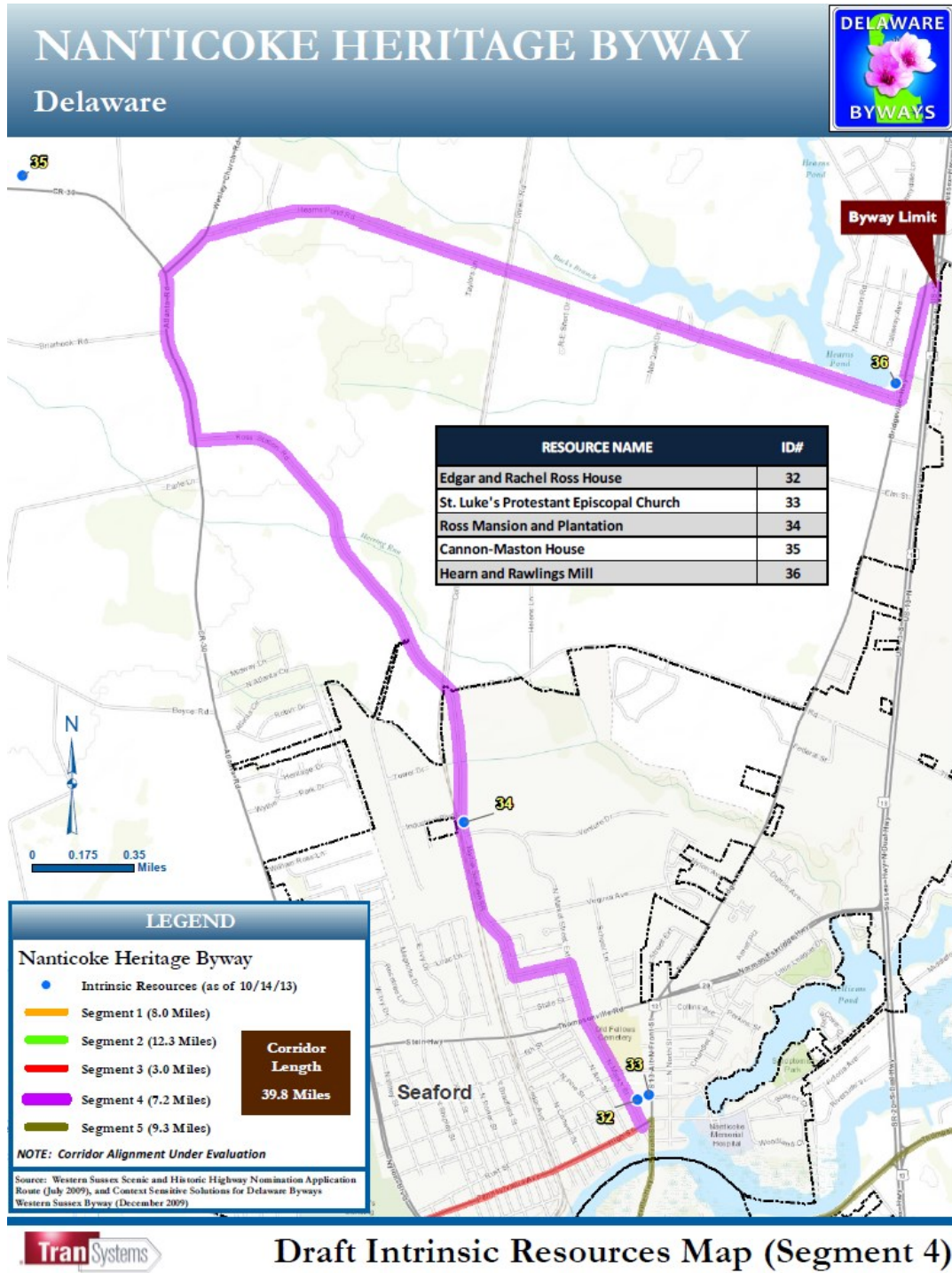
Greek Revival, c. 1930

One story, five bays, common bond brick; flat roof with metal guttering; central single wood door with sidelights and fanlight; double-hung sash windows with fanlights and brick arches; concrete steps with metal railings and ramp.

Segment 4

Bridgeville/North Seaford

Map





1. Triple Decker Chicken House

Three stories, eighteen bays, frame and metal sheeting; side-gabled metal roof; multiple window and door openings on all stories; all windows and doors boarded with wood panels.



2. Edgar and Rachel Ross House



413 High Street

Colonial Revival, c. 1894

Two-and-a-half stories, three bays, frame and brick; pyramidal shingled roof; pyramidal- and shed-roofed dormers; full-width wraparound porch with hipped roof, column supports, and brackets; single paneled wood door; double-hung sash windows; frame and brick additions.



3. St. Luke's Protestant Episcopal Church *

Front Street

Gothic Revival, c. 1838-1843/c. 1904

Two stories, three bays, brick; central three-story castellated tower; stone buttresses; paired paneled wood door beneath front-gabled awning; single lancet, triple lancet, and arched windows.



4. Governor Ross Mansion and Plantation *

23669 Ross Station Road

Italianate, c. 1859

Two-and-a-half stories, nine bays, brick and frame with stucco; side-gabled central main block with bracketed cornice between two front-gabled wings, three-story tower, and front-gabled garage; one-story, full-length porch with arched supports; paired paneled wood door with transom; double-hung sash arched windows.



5. Hearn and Rawlins Mill *

U.S. Route 13

Vernacular, c. 1879

Industrial complex featuring frame mill and warehouses with metal siding; double-hung sash windows; original machinery still extant.



6. Cannon-Maston House

Atlanta Road

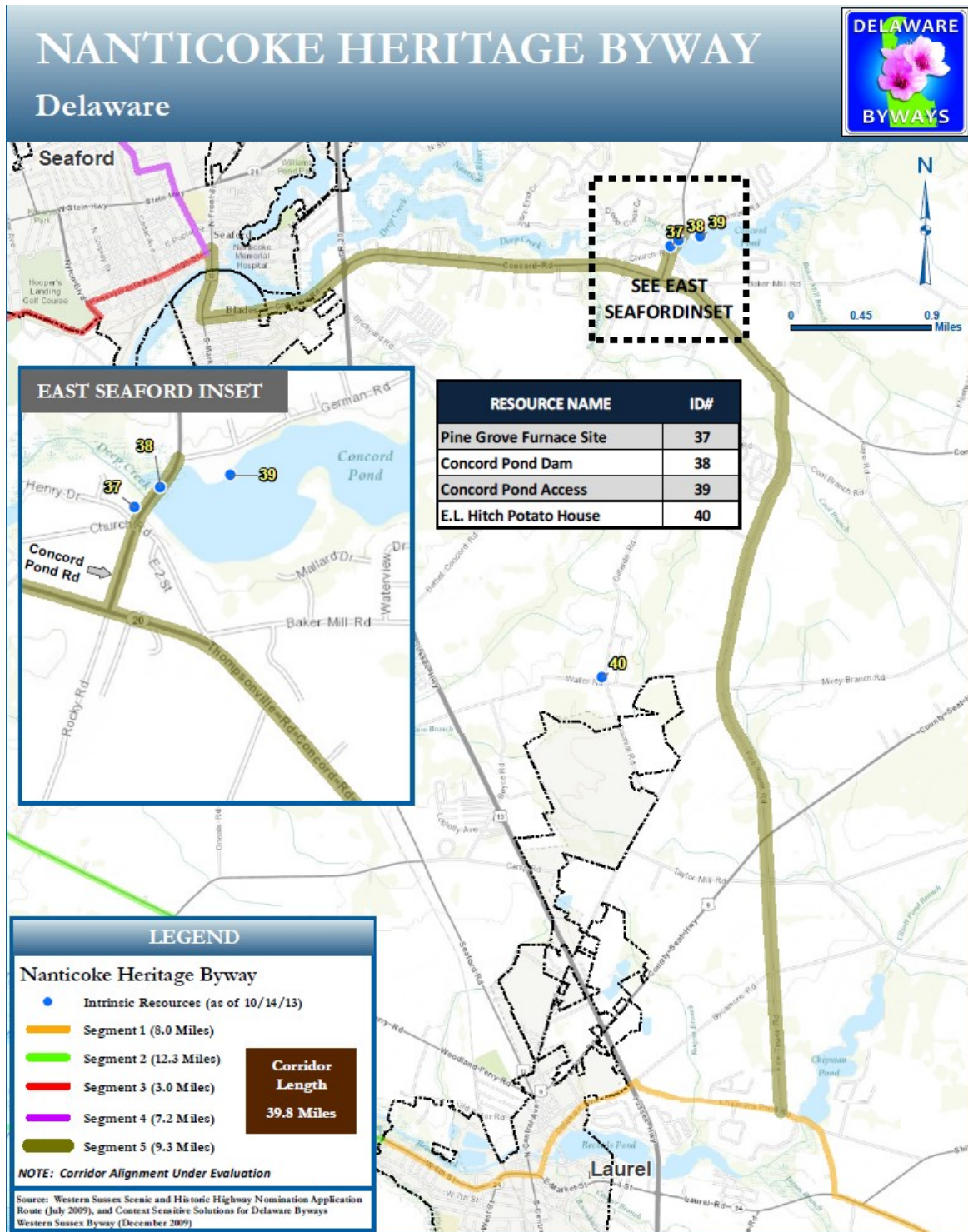
Federal, c. 1727

Three bays, one-and-a-half stories, brick; side-gabled shingled roof with interior end brick chimneys; shed-roofed dormers; double-hung sash windows.

Segment 5

East Seaford

Map





1. Concord United Methodist Church



2. Woodland United Methodist Church and Cemetery

5123 Woodland Church Road

Gothic Revival, c. 1883

Two-and-a-half stories, three bays, frame; front-gabled shingled roof with a central cupola topped by a finial; paired paneled door with triangular fanlight; double-hung sash pointed arch windows; Palladian window on second floor; side-gabled frame wing with double-hung sash windows and single glass pane door.

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