

VII. Summary and Recommendations

This report details the Phase I Archaeological Identification Survey and Phase II Evaluation Investigations undertaken for the proposed Blue Ball Properties Area Transportation Improvement Project in Brandywine Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware. The Phase I Identification Survey involved the excavation of 480 STPs within the project APE. No additional archaeological sites were identified during the Phase I testing. Phase II Evaluation Investigations were undertaken at three sites. The first, the Augustine Cutoff Site (7NC-B-49), is a late nineteenth/early twentieth century domestic site occupied by employees of the DuPont company. The Phase II efforts involved the excavation of 175 STPs and five 3x3 foot TUs. Although one pit feature containing artifacts dating to the occupation of the site was located, the remainder of the site area was heavily disturbed during the widening of Concord Pike in the twentieth century and the subsequent placement of utilities along the edge of the western roadway. Because of the low probability of encountering additional intact archaeological contexts associated with the site, the Augustine Cutoff Site (7NC-B-49) is recommended not eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

The second site, the Weldin Plantation Site (7NC-B-11), is a historic farmstead that was occupied continuously from the early eighteenth century through its abandonment in 1934. The Phase II Evaluation Investigations involved the excavation of 170 STPs and 20 3x3 foot TUs. There is a great deal of documentary evidence concerning the site and its occupants. Deeds for the site show a clear chain of ownership dating back to the original survey in 1680. Most of the proprietors drafted wills providing at least partial descriptions of the property and their possessions (with the exception of Israel Peterson). The physical integrity of the site is excellent. While the identification of all of the early structures locations is incomplete at this stage, the remains of many structures dateable to (at least as early as) the mid-nineteenth century are visible at the ground surface. Preliminary excavations have also revealed evidence of post-constructed buildings in the rear yard, buried foundation remains of a separate room or building on the north side of the dwelling, and footings from possible porch features on the north and south side of the dwelling. The site is recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion D for the significant information it can contribute to our understanding of the evolution of rural farm life in New Castle County Delaware from the late eighteenth to early twentieth centuries. The proposed project will have an adverse effect on 7NC-B-11. Archaeological data recovery is proposed to mitigate the adverse effect.

The third site, the Ronald McDonald House Site (7NC-B-54), is a Woodland I resource procurement site evidenced by a relatively low density scatter of lithic artifacts. The Phase II Evaluation Investigations involved the excavation of 163 STPs and nine 1x1 meter TUs. A total of 182 pre-contact artifacts were recovered. Because of its high degree of depositional integrity and fine resolution of activity loci, the Ronald McDonald House Site offers a unique opportunity to consider a procurement site in the context of the broader network of sites within the Piedmont region. Therefore the site is recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion D. The proposed project will have an adverse effect on 7NC-B-54. Archaeological data recovery is proposed to mitigate the adverse effect.