

ABSTRACT

This report presents the results of a Phase IB archaeological identification-level survey conducted in preparation for the proposed Bridge 1-651 replacement project in Christiana Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware. This project includes the replacement of the existing bridge that carries Newport Road over CSX rail lines to conform to CSX requirements. The construction of a pedestrian link between the Delcastle Technical High School campus to the southeast of the bridge and the Marshallton School, which provides additional classroom space for the technical school, northwest of the bridge, is also planned. This report was prepared for Pennoni Associates, Inc., and the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT).

DelDOT archaeology staff determined the archaeological Area of Potential Effects (APE) and the appropriate scope of work for the project. The archaeological APE is considered to be any part of the project that is subject to physical disturbance from the project. The APE extends along Newport Road and within 50 feet of its margins for a distance that extends from the entrance of Delcastle Technical High School to James Avenue. A stormwater management feature will be emplaced in the southwest quadrant of the Newport Road – Bridge 1-651 intersection, and thus the corresponding portion of the APE at this location extends into the entire residential property of 1500 Newport Road. The APE also includes the portion of Kiamensi Street and its 50-foot margins for a distance that stretches from its intersection with Newport Road to School Lane; it also includes the portion of School Lane and its 50-foot margins for a distance that stretches from its intersection with Kiamensi Street to a point at the front of the Marshallton School.

Based on the extent of previous disturbance and extent of the proposed project, DelDOT archaeology staff defined only two areas within the APE for further subsurface archaeological survey. The first area is a narrow corridor along the Newport Road margin in a residential yard (1419 Newport Road) located south of the railroad and east of Newport Road; the second area is the entirety of a residential yard (1500 Newport Road) located north of the railroad and west of Newport Road. The first of these two areas will be used for a sidewalk; the second will be used for stormwater management. Note that the CSX corridor is oriented southwest to northeast while Newport Road is oriented southeast to northwest. As a result, the field director employed “Grid North,” and therefore the two areas of the APE were considered to be situated in the northeast and southwest quadrants of the CSX-Newport Road intersection.

Based on background research conducted for this investigation, soils data, and the hypothesized integrity of the deposits, it was determined that there existed moderate to high potential for the APE to contain significant archaeological resources. A.D. Marble & Company excavated a total of 23 shovel test pits (STPs) in the APE and identified an historic archaeological site (7NC-E-185) within the southwest quadrant of the APE. The site is associated with the occupation of an early twentieth-century American Foursquare structure (CRS No. N-13111), which is currently inhabited and stands at the east end of the 1500 Newport Road property. Due to a lack of architectural significance, the dwelling was previously not recommended eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Site artifacts were discovered within approximately 100 feet of the standing structure and were collected from landscape fill and buried plowzone deposits surrounding the dwelling. The materials range from early to mid-twentieth century in age. The lack of depositional integrity and presence of chronologically mixed assemblages suggests to A.D. Marble & Company that 7NC-E-185 is ineligible for listing in the National Register and that no further investigation of the site is warranted. No significant archaeological resources (i.e., no archaeological sites) were identified in the northeast quadrant of the APE, and no further work is recommended at that location.

The field investigations took place on October 29-30, 2008. A.D. Marble & Company personnel involved in the field investigation included Field Director David L. Weinberg and Field Technicians Justin Bracken and Jonathan Gutsche. Christine Gill conducted laboratory cataloging and analyses of the cultural materials. Michael Lenert served as Principal Investigator and principal author of the report. Catherine Dluzak authored the historical overview; David Brett, Bryan Butina, and Alan Dorfman prepared the report figures. Jeanne Napier edited the report. A.D. Marble & Company extends thanks to Wally Poindexter of 1500 Newport Road, for graciously sharing information about the property and for allowing us access to his property.