

## ABSTRACT

A complete Phase I archaeological survey including background research, geomorphology, and field investigations have been completed for the Delaware Department of Transportation's (DelDOT) proposed State Route (S.R.) 26 (Clarksville to Assawoman Canal) Improvements project located in Baltimore Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware. The project Area of Potential Effects (APE) is located on the Frankford and Bethany Beach, Delaware 7.5 minute United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic quadrangles, in the Coastal Bay physiographic province of Delaware's Lower Coastal Plain. The S.R. 26 Improvements project APE consists of approximately 11.83 ha (29.22 ac) of roadway corridor and stormwater management areas. Background and geomorphological research identified 24 test areas within the project APE; however, by the time of the survey, two were no longer testable.

Three of the 22 test areas are located adjacent to existing historic cemeteries and were specially tested (stripping of the topsoil to expose the surface of the subsoil) for the presence of unmarked graves. The remaining test areas were surveyed *via* pedestrian reconnaissance and 93 hand excavated shovel test pits (STPs). The survey of the 22 test areas resulted in the identification of a historic period isolated artifact in Test Area 1, a few historic period artifacts in Test Area 3, and a historic period archaeological site in Test Area 21.

The single non-diagnostic whiteware sherd found in Test Area 1 is not indicative of an archaeological site and most likely represents roadside litter. It is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The seven pieces of glass found in Test Area 3 were found within the NRHP boundaries of the Spring Banke property (S-454); however, based on the functionally and temporally non-diagnostic nature of the artifacts, they are not able to yield new or insightful information about the use of the NRHP-listed property.

The Parsons' Store site (7S-K-143) was identified during mechanical stripping of Test Area 21. The middle to late twentieth century store remains are limited to the basal courses of concrete block or brick foundations, minimally displaced brick piers, and a cellar depression filled with 1950s and 1960s destruction debris. The site has been heavily impacted by the razing of the buildings *ca.* 1971, and by this survey, leaving no additional areas for excavation within the project APE. While the store was in operation during part of the Urbanization and Early Suburbanization Period (1880-1940), the site no longer contains extant above ground structures, and the below ground remains have been fully excavated, mapped, and photographed. Historically, the store is not significant since it does not represent one of the earliest or unique stores in Ocean View. No historically significant families or events are associated with the history of the store, and the archaeological remains do not provide any information that was not already available on historic documents or by speaking with family descendents. The Parsons' Store site (7S-K-143) is recommended as not eligible for listing in the NRHP, and no further archaeological investigations are recommended.

No previously recorded pre-contact or historic period archaeological sites listed or eligible for listing in the NRHP are present in the S.R. 26 Improvements project APE, and specialized testing for unmarked graves near three historic cemeteries proved negative. The Phase I survey did identify two historic period artifact isolates and one historic period archaeological site, none of which are eligible for listing in the NRHP due to their inability to contribute significant information about the land-use histories of the properties on which they were recovered. Therefore, the S.R. 26 Improvements project, as currently designed, will not affect any significant pre-contact or historic period archaeological resources, and no additional archaeological investigations are warranted.

**Sussex County, Delaware  
Baltimore Hundred  
S.R. 26 (Clarksville to Assawoman Canal) Improvements**

**Phase I Archaeology**

**Prepared by:**

**Barbara J. Gundy, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator**

**Christopher T. Espenshade**

**Gerald M. Kuncio**

**and**

**Margaret G. Sams, C.P.S.S.**

**Prepared for:**

**The State of Delaware  
Department of Transportation**

**Submitted by:**

**SKELLY and LOY, Inc.  
Engineers-Consultants**

**2500 Eldo Road, Suite 2  
Monroeville, PA 15146  
(412) 856-1676**

**2601 North Front Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110  
(717) 232-0593**

**April 2004**