

RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Objective:

The objective of this research was to determine whether the area of potential effect of the proposed Centerville Road improvement project contains architectural resources which meet National Register Criteria for eligibility, and/or whether any of these resources collectively constitute a National Register-eligible historic district.

2. Methodology:

Background research was conducted at the DESHPO and the Hall of Records, both in Dover; the Morris Library at the University of Delaware, Newark; the Historical Society of Delaware, and the New Castle County Deed Room and Tax Assessor's Office, both in Wilmington. Historical maps, general histories, biographical information, historical photographic collections, and deed and tax data were the main sources of information utilized in this study.

A field survey of architectural resources over 50 years of age within the proposed project area of potential effect identified 15 properties containing architectural resources 50 years of age or older. During the field survey, information was collected concerning the type, style, and condition of each resource. The age of each building surveyed was initially classified by visual assessment. Black-and-white 35mm photographs were taken of each recorded resource within the project area of potential effect. To evaluate the potential for a historic district, the field investigation included an examination of properties beyond the immediate project limits. Information as to the date of construction was later obtained from both deeds and the tax assessor's office as supporting evidence. All relevant cultural resource survey forms were completed for the recorded resources, and are included in Appendix A of this report.

3. Expected Results:

Based upon DESHPO file information, it was expected that at least seven properties would require investigation, and that an unspecified number of additional resources over 50 years of age would be identified within the project area of potential effect. It was not expected that resources dating from the period of Exploration and Frontier Settlement: 1630-1730 ±, would be extant in the project area, since European settlement was sparse in the area during this period, and the survival rate for these properties is low.

Expected property types dating from the periods of Early Industrialization: 1770-1830 ±, and Industrialization and Early Urbanization: 1830-1880 ±, would typically be associated with farmsteads, and would potentially include farmhouses, barns, springhouses, and/or other outbuildings. An eligible site should consist of a main dwelling with outbuildings and/or farm buildings of sufficient number and type to clearly convey the domestic and/or agrarian uses to which the property was put during the period of significance. The property should exhibit

overall integrity of design, materials, and immediate setting to be considered eligible for the National Register.

Farmstead resources relating to the architectural theme would most likely derive significance from Criterion C, having distinctive characteristics of a type or method of construction. Properties significant under the agriculture theme would most likely derive their significance from Criterion A. These would require documented associations with an event or trend that was important in the history of the area or county.

Expected property types dating from the period of Urbanization and Early Suburbanization: 1880-1940 ±, include bridges under the Transportation theme, and early twentieth-century Revival-style mansion houses under the themes of Architecture and of Major Families, Individuals, and Events.

Bridges would most likely derive significance from Criterion C, and should exhibit overall integrity of design, materials, and immediate setting to be considered eligible for the National Register.

An early twentieth-century mansion house may derive its significance from Criterion A, for its association with the early suburbanization of Christiana Hundred, or Criterion B, if it were the home of historically significant individuals. Such a property type could also derive significance from Criterion C if it embodied distinctive characteristics of its type, period, or methods of construction, or if it possessed high artistic value. As survival rates for these resources are currently excellent, eligible resources would be expected to possess a high degree of architectural or historical significance, as well as a high degree of integrity with respect to location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship.