

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This report has documented a Cultural Resource Reconnaissance of Delaware Route 273 between Delaware Route 7 and U.S. Route 13 in New Castle County, Delaware, performed by Cultural Heritage Research Services, Inc. (CHRS) of North Wales, Pennsylvania, for the Delaware Department of Transportation from May 1987 through May of 1988.

The proposed highway project involves improvements to Delaware Route 273 from just east of Delaware Route 7 to just west of U.S. Route 13. This project would consist of widening the present road to a four-lane highway with a fourteen-foot, non-crossable median. The area examined by the survey included the existing right-of-way and all necessary construction easement right-of-way.

Eleven standing structures were examined during the survey (Table 9, Appendix B). Of the eleven, only one appeared to have local merit, i.e., "Tat Tat," but this structure does not meet the fifty-year criteria or appear of sufficient importance to qualify for an exclusion. None of these structures appear to meet the criteria of eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Table 9  
Summary of Historic Structures  
Route 273 Project  
New Castle County, Delaware

Locus	Name		Eligible	Listed
1	Frank E. Acierno	21 Villas Drive	NO	NO
2	Vernon C. West	414 Christiana Road	NO	NO
3	C. Everett Mercer	311 Christiana Road	NO	NO
4	Robert T. Weaver	243 Christiana Road	NO	NO
5	Oak Hollow Associates	227 Christiana Road	NO	NO
6	Joseph L. Pasturski Jr.	182 Christiana Road	NO	NO
7	Maynard Reed Jr.	185 Christiana Road	NO	NO
8	Horace L. Coffin	185 Christiana Road	NO	NO
9	John Hawkins Sr. (Tat Tat)	160 Christiana Road	NO	NO
10	John W. Hopkins	Hares Corner	NO	NO
11	David P. Bevis	Hares Corner	NO	NO

Three historic archaeological sites, the Taylor Farm site (7NC-E-87), the Bethel Church site (7NC-E-88), and the Clayton Farm site (7NC-E-89), were located in the project corridor. Phase II work was performed in an effort to evaluate the nature of these sites (Table 10).

Table 10  
Summary of Archaeological Properties  
Route 273 Project  
New Castle County, Delaware

<b>Site:</b>	7NC-E-87	7NC-E-88	7NC-E-89
<b>Name:</b>	Taylor Farm	Bethel Church	Clayton Farm
<b>Type:</b>	domestic	public/domestic	domestic/tenant
<b>Period:</b>	1866-1930	1780-1900	1890-1940 <sup>±</sup>
<b>Within ROW:</b>	partially	partially	yes
<b>Eligible:</b>	no	yes	no
<b>Impacts:</b>	n/a	no adverse	n/a
<b>Additional Work:</b>	no	no	no

\*two prehistoric bifaces found

#### Taylor Farm Site

The Taylor Farm was a family-owned and market-oriented agricultural enterprise. Historical research indicated that it had been an active agricultural concern from 1866 to 1936. During the first generation, in Henry Taylor's time, the farm seemed to have worked smoothly, for there is a sense of pride in Henry's will: "my farm where I lived all my life" (New Castle County Will Book G2:432). It seems that after Henry Taylor's time, the farm might not have been as successful. Delaware had been famous for its peach orchards, but, with the arrival of the peach blight late in the nineteenth century, peach farms virtually disappeared from Delaware. Even if the orchard was of a different type, given the nature of the soils on the Taylor land, whatever crop the Taylor's were trying to produce may have done poorly. When the last piece of the Taylor farm was sold in 1936, it was not as agricultural farm land. Anna M. Taylor sold the property to the Rosemont Development Company, Inc., presumably for "development." In fact, the Route 273 project is a response to a need to upgrade the old Christiana-New Castle Road, which is no longer able to accommodate the increased traffic load resulting from the post-World War II suburban sprawl, which is typical of the current settlement pattern in the Eastern United States.

On the Taylor site 60 shovel tests and 5 test units were excavated. These tests indicated that there was little, if any, vertical or horizontal integrity to the site. A great deal of material on the site was thought to be intrusive and had little to do with the site's history as a farmstead during its late nineteenth to early twentieth-century occupancy. Modern trash, abandoned automobiles, and their parts were mixed with the original soil, effec-

tively preventing the gathering of valuable information pertaining to the Taylor family. It was not possible to locate or define any areas of differing activities on the site, nor was any pattern exhibiting changing use of space through time revealed. The location of the original structure was determined in Phase I and Phase II testing. The foundation of the house had been filled by unconsolidated modern fill and was hazardous to excavate. The site does not appear to meet the criteria of eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No additional work is recommended.

### Bethel Church Site

The Bethel Church has a long and interesting history, beginning with its founding as a "mission" of the Welsh Tract Church at the foot of Iron Hill, near Newark, Delaware. As early as 1786, a log church was built on land provided by a neighboring parishioner and farmer, David Morton. In 1838-1839 the Bethel Church was established as a church in its own right. Church officials held regular business meetings, of which careful records were kept. The church reached its apex in the mid-nineteenth century. It was then that the church contained the most members, most of them quite active in church affairs. Church membership declined during the last third of the nineteenth century. After 1871 Bethel Church ceased to send a representative to the Baptist Association; however, the church attempted a resurrection in 1922. They even tried to incorporate, but no record of an incorporation has been found.

Although the Bethel Church meeting house and associated structures between the church and Route 273 are gone, this site is relatively undisturbed. In all, 157 shovel tests and 13 test units were conducted on the Bethel Baptist Church site. The soil appeared to be undisturbed, except for some leveling probably related to landscaping. None of the tests contained any subsurface features other than disturbance related to the modern septic system and the open well filled with modern debris. The shovel tests did identify concentrations of types of artifacts and their horizontal patterns of deposit across the site. Analysis of the cultural material noted that this material was differentially distributed, suggesting relatively separate deposits for the church and the parsonage.

While it was known that the Bethel Church was constructed on stone piers, it had been hoped subsurface features associated to the other two structures, if not the church, would be present. Whether such features are still extant is unknown, but it is possible that the parsonage and sexton's house may also have been built on stone piers. The archaeological material recovered was generally domestic in nature probably relating to the sexton's dwelling and to the parsonage, although the ceramic distributions, particularly of pearlware and porcelain, suggest that evidence of some church activities may also be represented.

The Bethel Church site possesses the potential to add to our understanding of a variety of public and private activities spanning the nineteenth century. Archaeological remains at the site include an historic cemetery and artifacts associated with the nineteenth-century occupation of the site. The osteological remains have the potential to provide an in-depth study of nutrition and pathology of the local community through several

periods of growth and change. The existence of church records and the remains of tombstones would allow for socioeconomic and socio-cultural data to be gathered for the interred individuals, thereby providing an historical base within which the osteological data can be examined. The artifactual data at the site have suggested that spatially segregated activity areas exist; these could potentially reveal information concerning the function of the church site. Little data of this kind is currently available (see Catts and Cunningham 1986). The clerical domestic occupation of the site provides a relatively rare opportunity for comparison with other types of domestic occupations in the immediate area (Basalik et al. 1988, see also Custer and Cunningham 1986). Documentary evidence suggests that the archaeological record may hold evidence of ethnic variations, which could be explored, both within the site (between the sexton's house and church) and between this and other sites in the Middle Atlantic (see Schuyler 1980).

On the basis of the data available, it seems that the site is likely to provide information important in history and appears to meet the criteria of eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (36CFR60.4(d)). In addition, the significance of the Bethel Church site can be found in its association with the lives of persons significant to northern Delaware's past (36CFR60.4(b)).

Although the site does appear to meet the criteria of eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, Phase II work within the proposed project right-of-way indicated a relatively even distribution of cultural material, much of which may be related to modern disposal along the shoulder of Route 273. Testing in and adjacent to this right-of-way has resulted in a representative sample of the material contained in this portion of the site; additional testing within the right-of-way would provide redundant information. It is, therefore, recommended that no further work be performed at the Bethel Church site at this time.

#### Clayton Farm Site

Little is known about the activities of the tenants of the Clayton Farm site. The Clayton farm was tenant-owned and, presumably, market-oriented. Although the location was probably used for agricultural purposes from the early eighteenth century, the archaeological site seems to extend from the later part of the nineteenth to first half of the twentieth century. A series of shovel tests and 29 five-foot excavation squares were excavated at the Clayton Farm site, and additional areas were mechanically stripped. Archaeological materials included both historic and prehistoric artifacts. The prehistoric component consisted primarily of two bifaces and some fire cracked rock. No flake material was found. Historic material included a variety of domestic and architectural items dating from the late nineteenth century to the present. Although the foundation and cellar hole of the farmhouse were still extant, few other features were in evidence.

Although the Clayton Farm site is one of the few archaeologically investigated tenant houses in Northern Delaware whose tenancy rests upon firm historical evidence, the information gathered in this study constitutes virtually all the information available, both documentary and archaeological. The site, when recognized, had already been seriously impacted by the evolving land use and shifting economy surrounding it, thus during the evaluation phase of the archaeological work on the Clayton Farm site, most of the information available was gathered. Because of the limited area of intact soils and the lack of definitive functional and temporal distributional data, the Clayton Farm site no longer possesses the potential to add to our understanding of rural life in northern Delaware. No further work is recommended.