

Georgetown-Lewes Rail/Trail Study

- Rail/Trail Study:
Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park
- New Road Extension
(House Resolution No. 47)

August 22, 2011



Presentation Outline

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 - Statewide Rails to Trails/Rails with Trails 2006 Master Plan
 - Project Goals
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- New Road Extension (House Resolution No. 47)
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- Rail/Trail Study: Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park
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 - Current Freight Rail Usage/Operations
 - Future Rail Usage/Operations
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 - Preliminary Structural Evaluation
- Decision Considerations



Background

Benefits:

- Transportation / Livability
- Conservation / Environment
- Tourism and Economic Development / Revitalization
- Historic Preservation / Community Identity
- Public Health and Quality of Life

Both the Delaware House and Senate voted unanimously to direct DeIDOT to *“create contiguous systems or networks of walkways and bikeways within and between cities and towns in Delaware in order to provide travelers with the opportunity for safe, convenient, cost-effective and healthy transportation via walking and bicycling.”*

(Senate Concurrent Resolution # 13)



Example: Trolley Line Trail, NJ



Background

- 17.8 mile corridor from the Historic Georgetown Train Station to the Cape Henlopen State Park
- Currently owned by the State of Delaware and operated by the Delaware Coast Line Railroad for the purposes of moving freight



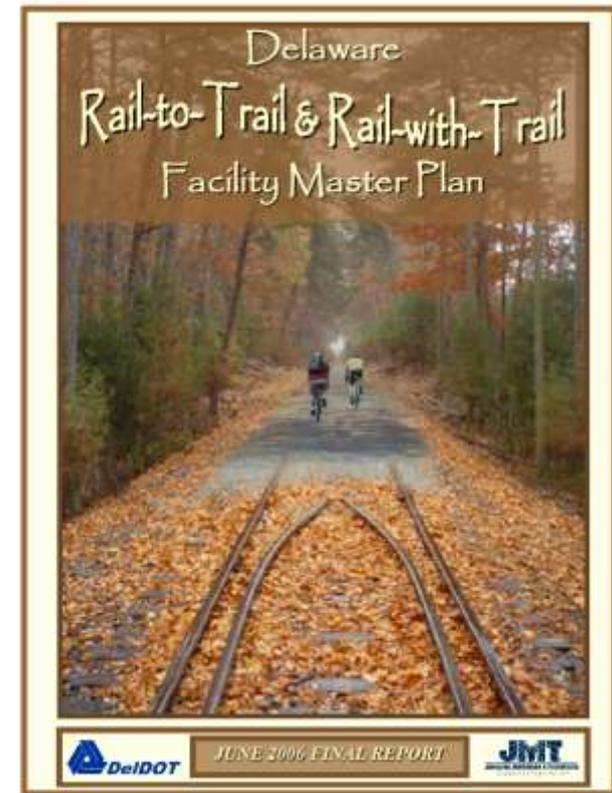
Example: Allegheny Highlands Trail of Maryland



Background

The Statewide Rails to Trails/Rails with Trails 2006 Master Plan:

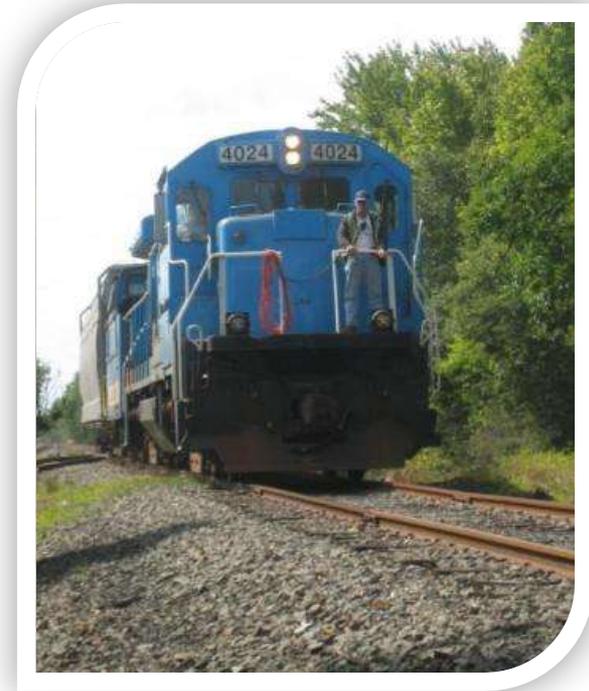
- Identifies 11 railroad corridors for potential bicycle and pedestrian use
- Recommends the Georgetown to Lewes corridor for inclusion in the prioritization process for Capital Improvements Program projects for its:
 - Potential connectivity
 - Value to the overall statewide trail system
 - Proximity to the Southern Delaware Heritage Trail and
 - Availability of Right-of-Way (66 feet typical width)



Background

Project Goals:

- Provide a Shared Use Path
- Provide connection to existing trails and bike routes along the corridor
- Provide user amenities such as trailheads, parking, mile markers
- Compatible with Delaware Rail-To-Trail/
Rail-With-Trail Facility Master Plan



Background

Regional Consistency:

Statewide Rails to Trails / Rails with Trails Facility Master Plan (June 2006)

- Recommends the Georgetown-to-Lewes rail corridor for inclusion in the prioritization process for CIP projects

2003-2008 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

- Identified walking or jogging paths and bike paths as high priorities for the Georgetown and Lewes area according to a research study based on regional demand analysis.

Sussex County Comprehensive Plan (April 2008)

- Identifies the Georgetown-Lewes Rail/Trail as a proposed facility within the strategic plan to provide more parks and trails and create more recreation opportunities for Sussex County residents.

Town of Georgetown Comprehensive Plan (January 2010)

- Includes the Georgetown-Lewes Rail/Trail as a component of their pedestrian and bicycle circulation plan which is “valuable for recreation, but also for bicycle transportation to the many employers along its length”.

Delaware State Strategy for Policy and Spending (April 2011)

- Georgetown and Lewes are within Level 1 Investment Areas which should adopt policies to develop and maintain recreation areas, greenways and bikeways.



Background

Regional Consistency: Trail Network & Neighborhood Connectivity

Existing railroad corridor is in close proximity to:



- Bicycle Routes and Greenways (Rt 9, US 1, Cape Henlopen Drive, Gills Neck Road, Old Orchard Road)
- Multi-use Paths and Off-Road Trails (Junction and Breakwater Trail, Southern Delaware Heritage Trail, Sidewalks and shared roadway facilities, Lewes bicycle friendly travel network)
- Residential Developments and Neighborhoods (existing and proposed)
- Commercial Developments
- Scenic and Historic Highways "Lewes Byways"
- Cape May-Lewes Ferry
- Cape Henlopen State Park



Background

Regional Consistency: Junction Breakwater Trail

- Operated and managed by DNREC
- Close proximity to Georgetown/Lewes rail track corridor
- Current Trail Usage:
 - Frequently and heavily used
 - Special events 1,500 users a day



JUNCTION & BREAKWATER TRAIL 3.6 MILES

Permitted Trail Uses

-  Pedestrian
-  Bicycle
-  Wheel Chair

Grade Average
1% Overall

Trail Width
Minimum 10 feet
Maximum 12 feet

Surface Type
Crushed Rock

Stay on Trail
Shortcuts damage the environment

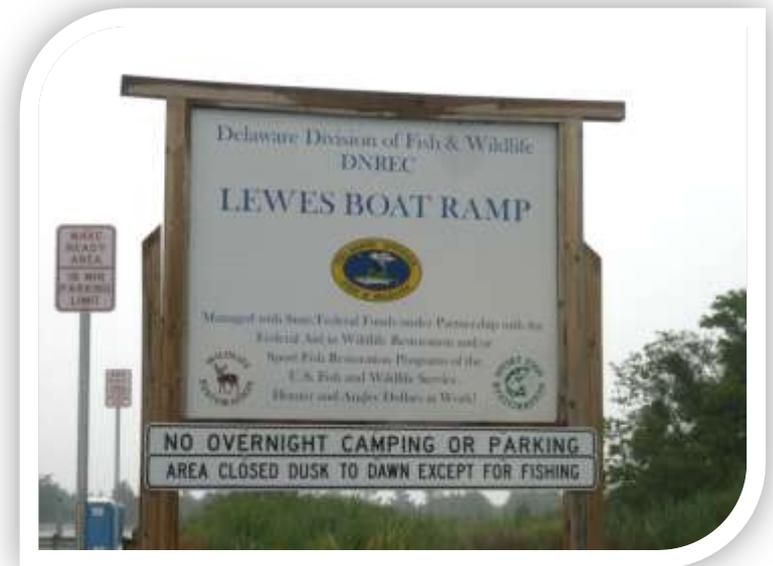
 Delaware State Parks
Division of Parks & Recreation



New Road Extension (House Resolution No. 47)

Project Needs:

- Relocation of the Lewes Boat Ramp
- Fire truck accessing SR 1
- Safety concerns:
 - Access from SR 1 southbound to New Road
 - Access from Minos Conway Road to SR 1 northbound due to crossing of two lanes of SR 1 traffic especially when towing a boat
- Increased traffic of towing boats along New Road



New Road Extension

(House Resolution No. 47)

Alignment:



New Road Extension

(House Resolution No. 47)

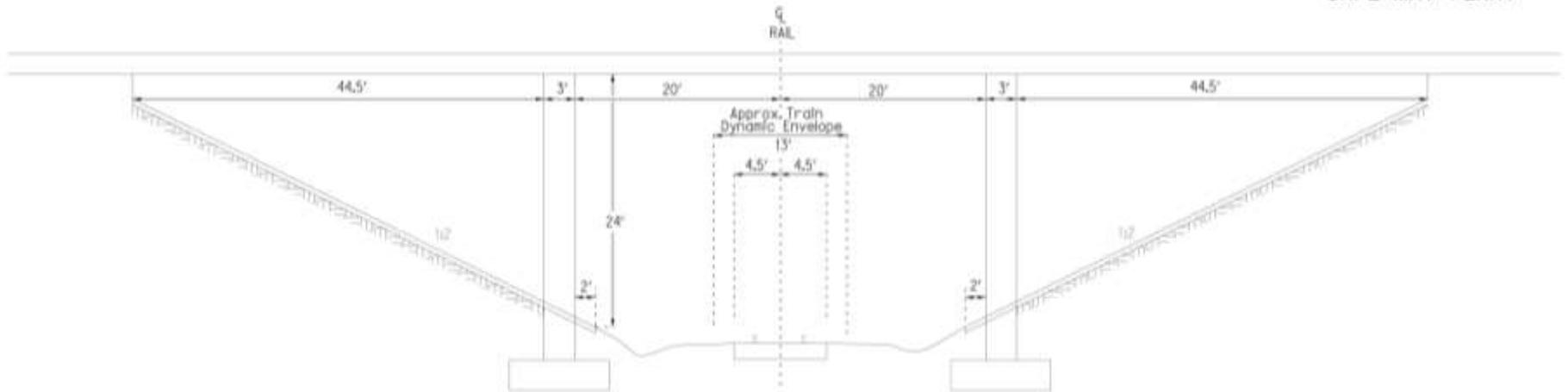
Alignment:

Existing bridge conditions

- 40 ft clear width between piers



↑
CAPE MAY FERRY

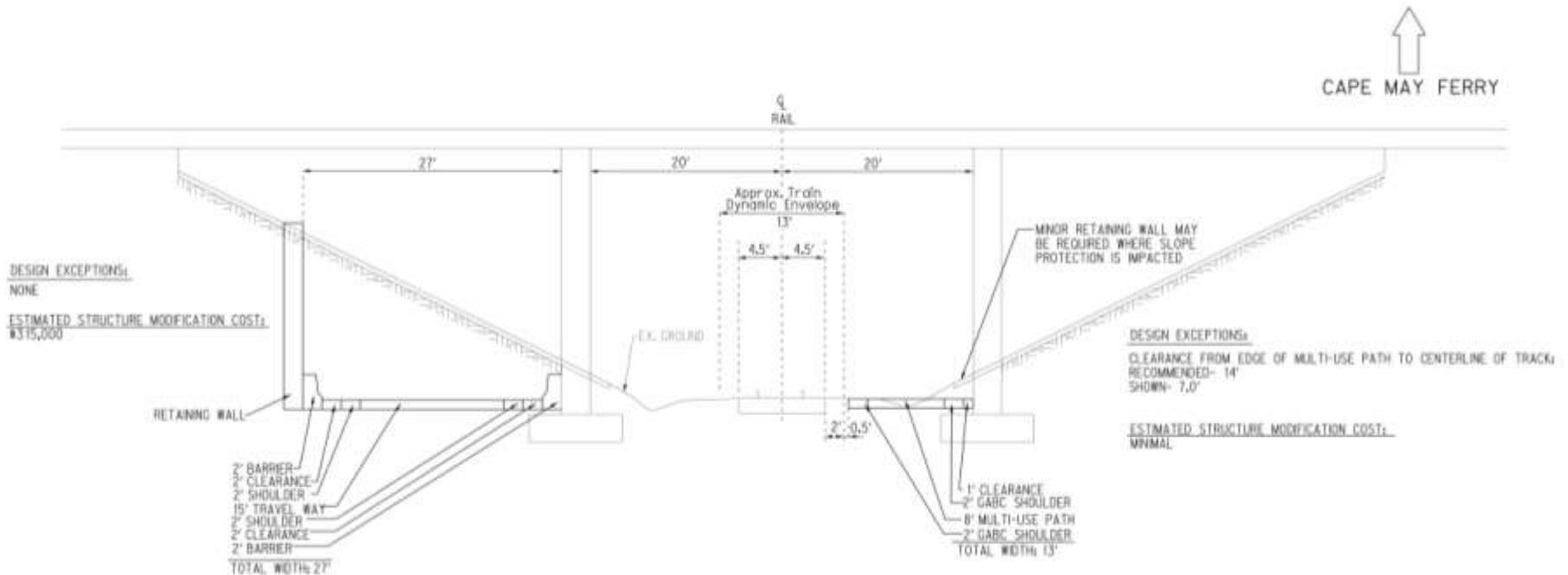


New Road Extension

(House Resolution No. 47)

Alignment:

Typical Sections: Rail-with-Trail option

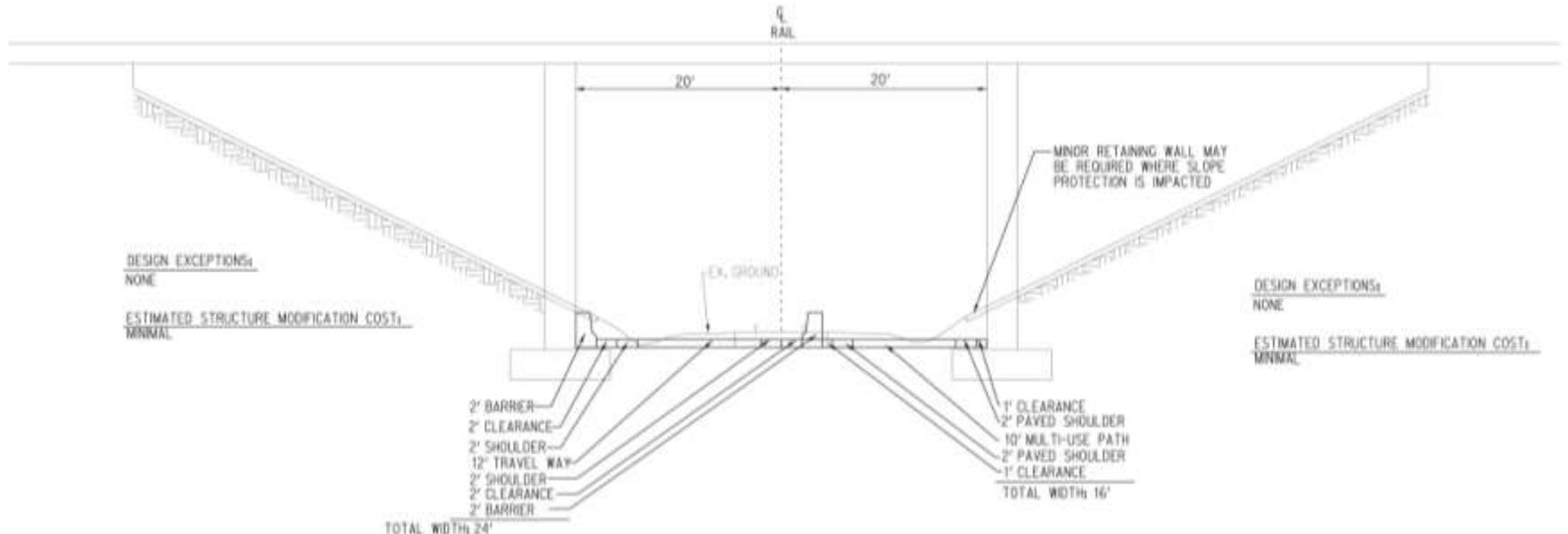


New Road Extension

(House Resolution No. 47)

Alignment:

Typical Sections: Rail-to-Trail option



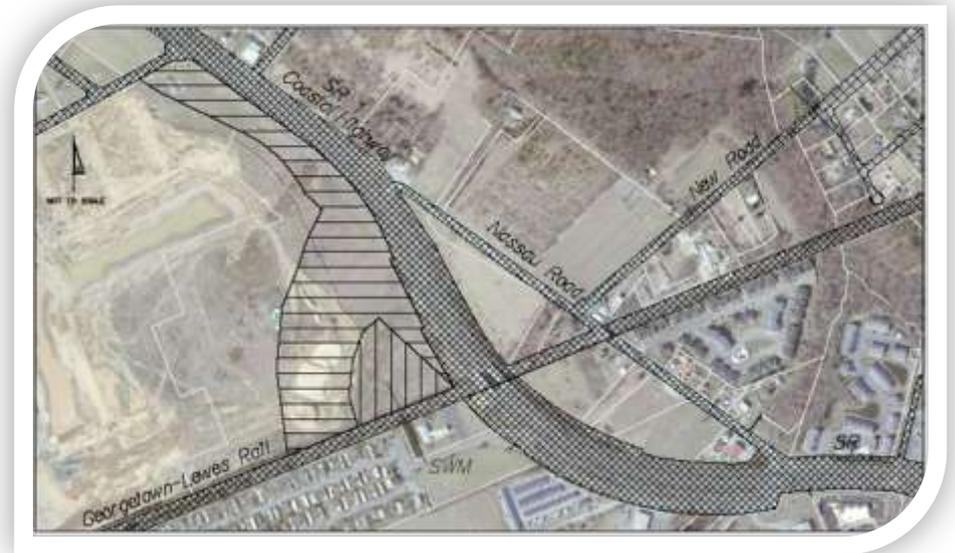
New Road Extension

(House Resolution No. 47)

Findings:

- A safe roadway connection from SR 1 southbound to New Road is feasible
- RTT and RWT are both feasible options
- Anticipated impacts to utilities, traffic, right-of-way, and environmental resources

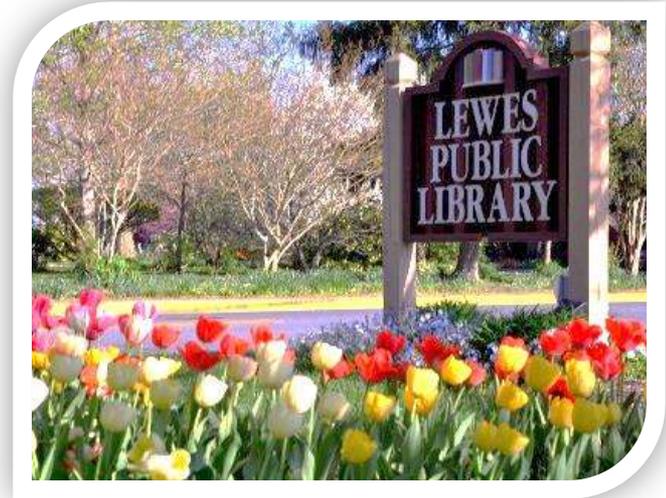
	RTT	RWT
New Road Extension Construction Cost Estimate Cost	3.7 million	4.7 million



Lewes Library Project

Coordination with City of Lewes:

- Potential library and parking lot expansion
- Purchase of adjacent property
- Requested at grade railroad crossing for pedestrians and vehicles (estimated \$280,000)
- Parking lot may serve as trailhead for Junction Breakwater Trail and Georgetown to Lewes Trail. Typical trailhead cost is approximately \$415,000 for 23 cars on a 1.2 acre lot.



Rail/Trail Study: Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Design Guidelines:

- Trail width: 10 ft usable width w/ 2 ft safety grading on both sides
- Motorized vehicles: EMS and rail maintenance vehicles only
- Equestrians prohibited
- Trail surface recommended to be asphalt pavement with stone dust safety grading
- Include mile markers, wayfinding signage, and benches
- Provide connectivity to nearby trails/bicycle routes/sidewalks



Example: Junction Breakwater Trail

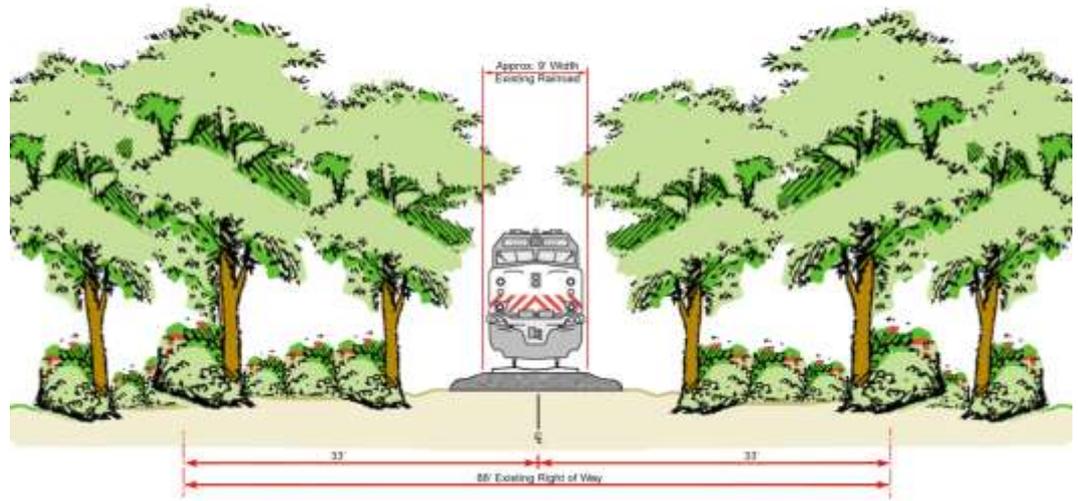


Rail/Trail Study: Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Design Guidelines:

Existing Conditions:

- 66' typical width of existing right-of-way
- Top of ballast is approximately 9' wide

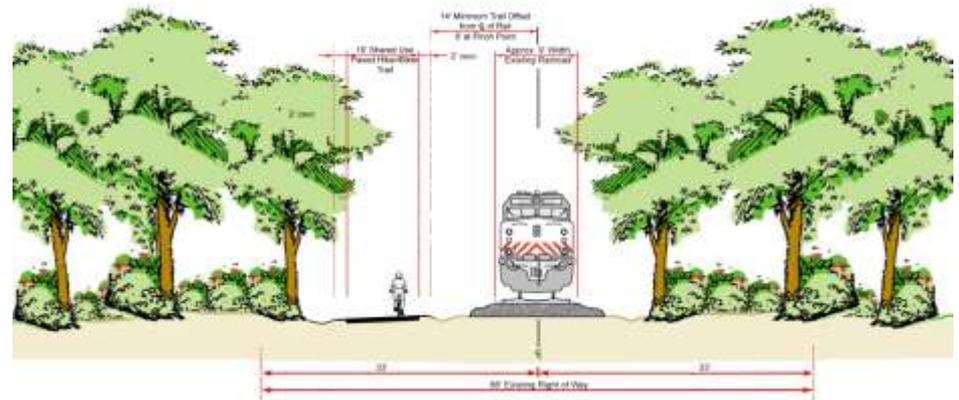


Rail/Trail Study: Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Design Guidelines:

Rail-with-Trail:

- Multi-use path is adjacent to the rail tracks
- Requires wider footprint



Existing Conditions



Artists Rendering of Proposed RWTOption

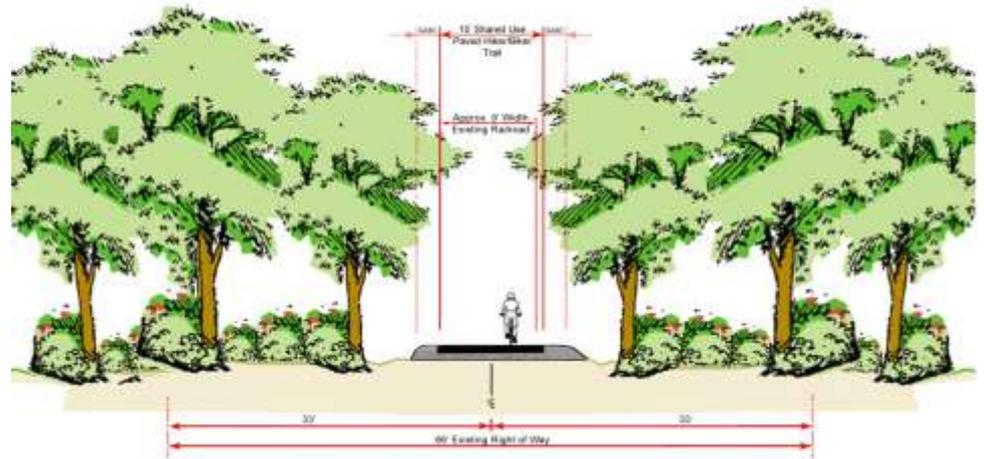


Rail/Trail Study: Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Design Guidelines:

Rail-to-Trail:

- Existing rail tracks and ties will be removed
- Multi-use path will go on existing rail ballast



Existing Conditions



Artists Rendering of Proposed RTT Option



Rail/Trail Study:

Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Current Freight Rail Usage/Operations:

- **Schagrin Gas
(at Sussex County Industrial Airpark)**

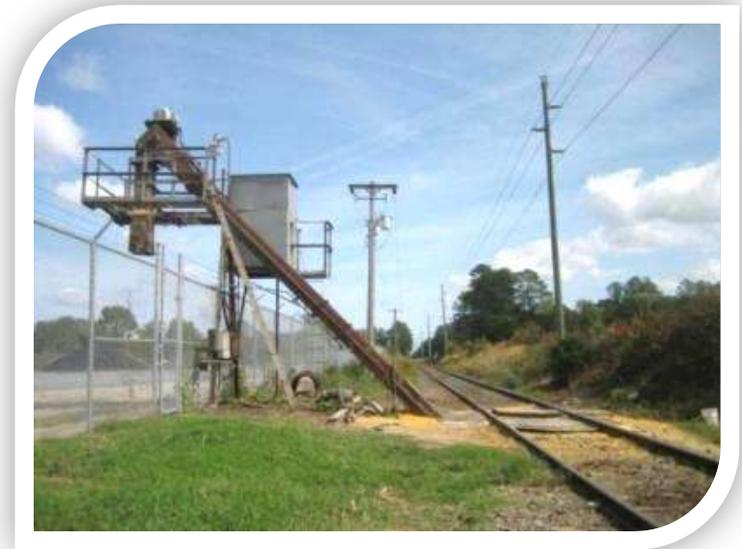
Approximately 2 to 4 carloads per week

- **Mountaire Farms (at Gravel Hill)**

Approximately 8 to 9 carloads per week

- **SPI Pharma
(near Cape Henlopen State Park)**

Approximately 3 carloads every two weeks
(materials are not hazardous)



- Freight rail operations are currently low speed and infrequent
- Coordination indicates that existing freight customers (Schagrin Gas and Mountaire Farms) would face negative economic impacts if rail operation was eliminated



Rail/Trail Study:

Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Future Rail Usage/Operations:

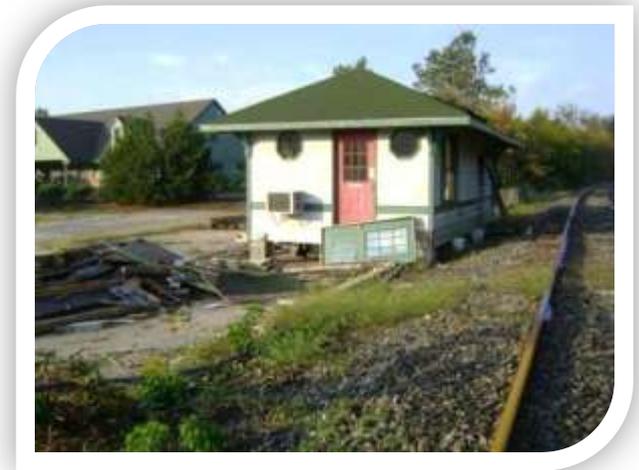
Existing/Future Rail Customers:

(No major increase in volume or usage anticipated)

- Mountaire Farms (Gravel Hill)
- Schagrin Gas (Sussex County Industrial Airpark)
- SPI Pharma (Cape Henlopen State Park)

No rail usage planned or anticipated:

- Justin Tanks (Sussex County Industrial Airpark)
- Off-shore wind farm
- Dinner excursion train
- Passenger rail line (due to low population density)



Rail/Trail Study:

Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Future Rail Usage/Operations: Passenger Rail Service

- Potential for a public transportation/transit route (**commuter train, light rail**) from Georgetown to Cape May-Lewes Ferry or Cape Henlopen State Park
- Future Sussex County land use and density were evaluated (year 2030):
Census data indicated a dwelling unit of **1.7 – 2.9**
- FTA provides general thresholds for successful transit projects based upon number of dwelling units per acre.
 - 0 - 3.0:** Does not support bus or rail
 - 3.01 – 7.0:** May support bus, does not support rail
 - 7.01 – 9.0:** Supports bus, may support rail
 - 9.01 – up:** Supports bus and rail

Comparison:

Commuter rail line from Philadelphia, PA to Atlantic City, NJ
Serves 2 counties with density of 2,309 people/sqmi and 489 people/sqmi.

Sussex County, DE density = 210 people/sqmi
(line never turned a profit; due to low ridership, the line was suspended from January to May, 2011)



Rail/Trail Study:

Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Future Rail Usage/Operations: Trans-shipment Area

If a portion of the rail line is terminated and tracks are removed, a trans-shipment area is required for SPI Pharma.

Potential locations:

- Gravel Hill
- Cool Springs Road

Cost: approx. \$330,000

(Does not include cost for mechanical or electrical equipment used by SPI Pharma for their operations or long term cost for material shipment.)



Rail/Trail Study: Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Environmental Impacts:

Findings:

- Environmental features/ resources are present within and in close proximity to the right-of-way corridor
- Impacts to the resources can be anticipated
- Avoidance, minimization, mitigation efforts need to be determined
- Permits will be required

Potential Environmental Impacts from Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park	RTT	RWT
STREAM CROSSING IMPACTS	0	7
WETLAND IMPACTS	0.4 ac	1.2 ac
FOREST IMPACTS	1 ac	4 ac



Rail/Trail Study: Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Right-of-Way Impacts:

RWT option will have significantly more property impacts

Approximately 175 properties will be impacted by Rail-With-Trail
(from Cool Springs Road to Cape Henlopen State Park)

- Sheds
- Mature trees and tree canopy
- Private landscaping
- (some of which have been placed on public right-of-way)

RTT avoids the majority (if not all) of the impacts



Rail/Trail Study:

Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Preliminary Structural Evaluation:

Railroad swing bridge over the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal

- Bridge structure carries rail tracks only
- Evaluation suggest that structure cannot accommodate and cannot be modified/widened to accommodate pedestrians/bicyclists



Freeman Highway Bridge (US 9)

- Bridge structure can be used for a trail or sidewalk/bikeway to cross over the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal
- The structure can accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists



Rail/Trail Study: Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park

Preliminary Trailhead Locations:

- Cool Spring Road
- Nassau (SR 1, Coastal Highway)
- Queen Anne's Railroad Station in Lewes
- Cape Henlopen State Park



Example: Junction Breakwater Trail



Decision Considerations

Considerations	RTT	RWT
New Road Extension (House Resolution No. 47)		
Construction cost	3.7 million	4.7 million

Considerations	RTT	RWT
Cool Spring to Cape Henlopen State Park		
Future Rail Usage/Operations	no	yes
Freight and passenger rail	no	yes
Trans-shipment area	\$330,000	n/a
Environmental Impacts		
Stream crossings	0	7
Wetland impacts	0.4 ac	1.2 ac
Forest impacts	1 ac	4 ac
Utility Impacts	\$150,000	\$220,000
Right of Way Impacts	minor	175 parcels
Right of Way cost	minor	major
Construction cost	\$10.1 million	\$12.9 million



Next Steps

- **Review Comments Received from Public Meeting Tonight**
- **Receive Input from the City of Lewes**
- **Further Coordination with SPI Pharma**
- **Provide Recommendation for Rail to Trail (RTT) or Rail with Trail (RWT)**
- **Determine Potential Funding Options and Implementation Strategies**
- **Complete Final Design and Right-of-Way Requirements**
- **Final Design (funded)**
- **Obtain Funding for Right-of-Way and Construction**
- **Obtain Right-of-Way**
- **Complete Construction**
- **Provide continuous Updates to the Public throughout the Process**

