

State Route Nine Coastal Heritage Byway – Corridor Management Plan

MINUTES of First Advisory Committee Meeting

Delaware City Library, 250 Fifth St, DE
Wednesday March 31, 2010
5:30 – 8:30 pm

Present: Mark Chura and DGI staff (Gail van Gilder, Helen S. Waite); consultant Jim Klein of Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects; Senators Bruce Ennis and Dori Connor; Legislative Assistant Drew Slater for Senators Cook and Bushweller; and 45 interested residents, property owners, business persons and stakeholders.

Mark Chura, Executive Director of Delaware Greenways, welcomed everyone, made the introductions and gave a brief outline of what the Corridor Management Planning process was for a national- and state-designated Byway.

It quickly became clear that there was a great deal of concern and confusion about a 50' buffer that had been discussed with many of these residents at meetings in previous years, at least some of which were with State of Delaware entities. The roles of DelDOT or Delaware Greenways (a non-profit, non-governmental organization) in this Byway process were not clear to many property owners. It was agreed that for the purposes of this planning process, a 50' buffer would not be included as a desirable enhancement for State Route Nine.

Jim Klein wrote down on a flip chart all the areas of concern brought up by attending members and these have been captured for use at the next meeting.

Gail van Gilder pointed out that this process, unlike so many others, gives Byway communities opportunities to obtain funds from the Federal Highway Administration to preserve and enhance this Byway in ways agreed upon by the Byway community itself. It is a way to manage coming changes so that they happen in a manner that is planned and acceptable to Byway communities, instead of haphazardly or inconsistent with the objectives of individual property owners, communities, or towns. This community planning process is encouraged and funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Scenic Byway Program. The funding is

administered by DeIDOT, and is a unique opportunity to be proactive in planning for the Byway corridor, rather than reactive, she observed.

Climate change and sea-level rise were addressed by Dave Carter, a local hunter, fisherman and Delaware native who heads up the Coastal Management Program for DNREC.

Jim Klein then showed slides of many other Byways that he has worked with that have natural intrinsic qualities and issues similar to ours. He discussed possible directions we could go in.

Jim Klein asked the attendees to write down on colored cards what people thought were the top three issues (blue cards) for the Byway, which were the three most important things or places needing conservation or preservation (pink cards) and which were the three most important aspects/problems/areas needing enhancement (yellow cards). Over 25 responses were returned for each subject area. These have been recorded and tallied, and the top three in each category will be discussed at the next meeting.

At the request of some attendees, the group decided that there would be only two sub-committees instead of three, with the segment line being at Taylor's Bridge. This way, like groups of stakeholders would be able to meet together.

Next Meeting: Thursday May 20, 2010, from 5:30-8:30 pm at Leipsic Fire Hall. Bring a brown bag dinner, and we'll bring desserts and beverages. Please invite other interested persons if we have missed their addresses. Thank you. *The date was changed from the announced one by request.*

More information: See State Route Nine and other Byways on Delaware Greenways' website at: www.delawaregreenways.org. Click on Scenic Byways, then State Route Nine. Meeting information is under "Updates."

Questions?: Call Helen S. Waite at (304) 236-2437 or email at waite@dmv.com. Or call Delaware Greenways at (302) 655-7275.