



**BAYSHORE HERITAGE BYWAY CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN
CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING #2**

MEETING SUMMARY

(Prepared by Kristen Ahlfeld, Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.)

MEETING DATE: January 19, 2011
TIME: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Old Salem Courthouse, Salem, New Jersey

ATTENDEES:

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company/Agency/Organization
Kristen	Ahlfeld	Principal Planner	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Shaun	Bailey		Partnership for the Delaware Estuary
Michael	Beck	Mayor	Lower Township
Sally	Birdsall, PP, AICP	Planning Consultant	Borough of Cape May Point
Alicia	Bjornson		Hancock House
Cindy	Bloom-Cronin	Project Engineer	NJDOT, Landscape Architecture
David	Bocanegra		USFWS/Cape May NWR
Vince	Bonica	Superintendent	Fort Mott State Park
Jody	Carrara		ANJEC/SJBC
Norris	Clark		Fishing Creek School
Sarah	Couchman		Lardner Klein/Landscape Architects
Colleen	Crippen		Lower Township
Jason	Downie	GIS Specialist	Cape May County Planning Department
John	Flynn		NJ DEP – Green Acres Program
Cheryl	Fox		Al & Sam's Canoe & Kayak
Curt	Gellerman		NJDEP – Green Acres
Larry	Hart		Bayshore Discovery
Dave	Hoovarth		Friends of Supawna Meadows NWR
Marion	Hoovarth		Friends of Supawna Meadows NWR
Dona	Kemling		Historic Cold Spring Village
Jim	Klein		Lardner Klein/Landscape Architects
John	Louderback		Lower Township/Fishing Creek School
Ron	Magill		National Trust for Historic Preservation
Jane	Morton Galetto	President	CU Maurice River/SJBC
Judy	Oshipp		Supawna Meadows NWR
Laurie	Pettigrew	Principal Biologist	NJDEP Division of Fish & Wildlife
Cheryl	Reardon		ANJEC/ SJBC

First Name	Last Name	Title	Company/Agency/Organization
Tom	Scofield		John Milner & Associates
Suzanne	Treyger		NJ Audubon Society
James	Turk	Director of Cultural Affairs & Tourism Information Services	Salem County

MEETING SUMMARY

Cheryl Reardon of the South Jersey Bayshore Coalition (SJBC) began the meeting with a brief introductory statement about the Bayshore Heritage Byway Corridor Management Plan and the basic premise for why the plan is needed. She also mentioned that the SJBC and the New Jersey Department of Transportation are co-sponsoring this project.

Overview of Meeting and Review of Project

Jim Klein, the Project Manager of the Lardner Klein (L/KLA) Project Team, gave a brief overview of the meeting agenda, and stated that he would be using the different colored handouts (posted to web site at http://www.lardnerklein.com/BHB_index.html) to guide the discussion of the meeting. He mentioned that the purpose of today's meeting was twofold: he would be reviewing the byway vision and goals and he would also be leading the group in a discussion to begin the development of corridor preservation and conservation strategies.

Jim also took a few minutes to review the corridor management planning process. He stated that the Bayshore Heritage Byway was officially designated as a state scenic byway in 2009 and that, per NJDOT policies, the byway sponsor has five years to prepare a corridor management plan (CMP), which is what the outcome of this project will be. He described the CMP as a blueprint for preserving and enhancing the special and unique qualities of the byway. It will also be a tool that will describe how the byway can be used for the betterment of the communities located along the byway.

Jim continued by stating that the project team met with the Corridor Management Committee (CMC) in October and then held the first round of public workshops in November to get a better understanding of some of the issues. He also mentioned that starting with this meeting, the CMC would be meeting on the third Thursday of every month; the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 16, 2012 at the Millville Public Library, 210 Buck Street, Millville, NJ 08332.

Key Issues along the Byway

Organized by CMC meeting topics, Jim began with a discussion of the key items and themes that the project team has learned thus far in the planning process (handout posted on the web site at <http://www.lardnerklein.com/>).

CMC Meeting #2: Preservation and Conservation Strategies

- Agriculture and wildlife – significant globally as well as nationally; “the bread basket of New Jersey”
- Need to insert the byway into existing preservation and conservation strategies; the byway needs a “bigger presence”
- Need to leverage existing preservation and funding programs (e.g., Green Acres)

- Sea level rise and invasive species – may require a regional and collaborative approach
- Access – by land and water; safety for all modes and users

CMC Meeting #3: Maintenance and Enhancement Strategies

- The byway serves as the “gateway” to many communities
- How can we enhance the communities along the byway and make them better gateways to the sites along the byway?
- Unified look that appeals to residents and visitors; includes curb appeal of local businesses and homes
- Overall lack of “Pride in Place”
- Edges of towns are less scenic/unattractive – how can the byway help?

CMC Meeting #4: Visitor Facilities and Heritage Tourism Development

Note: the order of meeting topics has changed based upon the input received at public meetings and the first CMC meeting. Heritage Tourism will now be discussed at Meeting #4

- What is the appropriate level of tourism for the byway and each community?
- How can we access resources?
- How can we get visitors to stay longer? Need better information on where to eat and stay
- Opportunities for coordinated programming of events to draw visitors
- Need to increase the level of comfort for visitors
- How can the byway help community businesses become oriented in heritage- and nature-based tourism? Need to capitalize of New Jersey-based business resources

CMC Meeting #5: Interpretive Development Strategies

- How can we build on the Coastal Heritage Trail?
- Coordinated interpretation needed; signage a huge issue
- Need interpretive program that links the stories of the byway together (to tell the complete story)
- Need water access; there are so many sites you can only see/get to from the water

CMC Meeting #6: Context Sensitive Roadside Safety and Signage Strategies

- The byway is primarily a driving route – need to accommodate all modes of travel
- How can we increase the range of choices in a context-sensitive way?
- Increases in traffic a concern
- Signage – definitely an issue. Should the Coastal Heritage Signs be incorporated into the byway?
- Possibly meet with NJDOT divisions to increase their awareness of the byway

CMC Meeting #7: Draft Plan and Implementation of Strategies

- How are we going to do all of this?
- The implementation plan puts you in “the ready position” for when funding does become available.

Conservation and Preservation Strategies

To begin the discussion of the corridor conservation and preservation strategies, Jim referred the group to the orange handout. He said that the discussion would be guided by five (5) strategies:

1. Define the byway corridor and increase awareness of its resources.

- The byway will be amended through Lower and Middle Township. Lower and Middle Township identified quite a few resources that are influenced by Delaware Bay that would have been missed if the byway was kept on its designed route. The recommended route gives better access and better captures the Bayshore. Lower and Middle Township are going through the formal proposal process to change the byway nomination; the recommended route will be included in this study.
- Hoping to connect to Delaware via the Cape May-Lewes Ferry.
- Each spur has a designated attraction at the end.
- View – what can be seen from the route? Develop viewshed maps, which include topography. Maintain character and experiences; identify areas with public values for establishing conservation easements.
- Places to Visit – museums, destinations open to the public related to themes of the byway. Teach people of its values.
- Regional resources – fold into byway planning

2. Establish conservation and preservation value and priorities

Jim mentioned that in order to receive designation as an All-American Road, we must be able to prove the national significance of two resources. In the case of the byway, we will be using natural and historic or cultural. (Historic was identified as the second intrinsic quality in the BHB's application for state designation; however, the cultural intrinsic quality is also strong and will be considered).

- Significance of the natural environment – Kristen Ahlfeld provided an overview of the natural intrinsic qualities of the byway, highlighting the national, and in some cases global, significance of the Delaware Bay and Estuary (e.g., Ramsar site, Last Great Place on Earth, as designated by the Nature Conservancy), its tributaries (e.g., Maurice National Scenic and Recreational River), and birds and wildlife (e.g., migratory shorebirds/horseshoe crabs, purple martins, monarch butterflies).
- Significance of historic and cultural resources - Tom Scofield stated that it will be the integrity of cultural resources and landscapes that will help get the Bayshore national designation. He mentioned that agricultural heritage will be of importance; evolution of practices, lifestyle, heritage. Patterned brick houses provide legacy. Salem and Cape May provide anchors to tremendous historic and cultural resources in between. We may want to consider a National Heritage Area for the Bayshore?
- Recreational resources – Sarah Couchman stated that because of the strength of the natural environment, there are numerous recreational opportunities, including wildlife, hiking, birding, and Bayshore Discovery (A.J. Meerwald). Recreational opportunities will be inventoried as part of the CMP. We'll also be compiling the event calendars of the various communities and organizations to get a better sense of events that visitors may be interested in coming to.

- Scenic Resources – Sarah continued the discussion by stating that the strength of the natural resources also supports strong scenic resources. She noted that scenic resources can also include the built environment as well; for example, Greenwich is a scenic townscape.
 - The project team completed a visual inventory and assessment of the byway, which identified character areas – high quality scenic resources. Sarah mentioned that there are many more high quality resources including Historic Salem, Bayside Tract, Glades Wetland, Cape May Point, Bayshore Discovery Spur. Low ratings were located primarily in transition areas at the edge of town between villages. The visual survey will be posted on the project website.
 - The project team also completed a physical survey of the byway which included a photographic inventory and GPS documentation of important manmade and natural features (positive or negative) that could influence the visitor’s impression of the byway. The physical survey will be posted on the project web site.

Sarah requested that CMC members review both the visual and physical surveys because the focus of the next meeting will be developing priorities for enhancements. Should we focus on maintaining already beautiful areas or do we want to focus on the less desirable areas and target these areas for improvements?

Jim then began the discussion of conservation and preservation strategies. Jim asked the group if, hypothetically, we could apply for grant funding today, what would be their conservation or preservation priorities?

- Architecturally – there is nowhere else in the Northeast that is as diverse as the Bayshore. Influenced by religious diversity.
- Coastal Heritage Trail does not take themes into consideration. The Coastal Heritage Trail is a bunch of points with no common travel route, whereas the byway should guide visitors into a cohesive experience. There is an opportunity to knit the two travel experiences together.
- May be more fun to dawdle
- Fort Mott welcome center
- Dike farming/salt hay farming – opportunity to tie nature and culture together. Bercham Farm on the Maurice River
- Religious diversity - site of first Quaker colony in North America; the area has the setting and environment that allowed for religious freedom and diversity (may be National significance)
- Swedish colonization
- Oyster/sturgeon industry restoration

Jim then asked, “What’s important?”

- Tie resources to the byway. Opens up more opportunities for federal funding.
- Go after upland areas, overlooking wetlands. This land is attractive to developers and is likely to be lost.
- Maintain trails/systems of trails. Need connectivity and access, especially during flooding.
- Solar industry – we could lose important ground, scenic qualities. Different/difficult infrastructure and connections.

- Vulnerable historic structures – Fishing Creek School, Judge Foster House; need to start with most vulnerable structures/resources
 - Awareness of Oyster/Shad species – specific areas for conservation; seafood in general
 - Horseshoe crab sanctuary
 - IBA Program – helps with conservation
 - No funding to maintain state parks/forests that we have
 - The link between interpretation and public experience needs to be managed
 - Invasive species, especially phragmites. Could the byway be helpful for this? Needs to be awareness. NJ Audubon has a program on Cape Island dealing with migratory birds and invasive species. Could also add swans and Canada Geese to the list.
 - Can we plug into school programs to raise awareness?
 - Maintenance of county roads is an issue. Our roads are deteriorating very quickly.
 - Need to be ready for visitors; some communities not as “fresh” as others
 - Need restrooms
 - Preservation – technical assistance is needed to help local land owners understand what they have
3. Key Partnerships
- Could create partnerships among resources or use the byway to link resources
 - Pool resources/conservation interests together (e.g. open space) and determine how they relate to the byway
 - May also need to collaborate on sea level rise as this may become an issue when talking about traveler experience. Can we obtain more conservation land to help out? May need regional consensus.
4. Collaboration
- Become partners in preservation to leverage funding and other resources; use smaller grants as a match for larger grants
 - Example - Ponderlodge Reforestation
5. Monitor Change
- Many agencies/organizations do not realize that projects are happening
 - Can use the byway as bringing more attention to projects, especially if the projects may impact the byway in some way
 - Want to be able to offer advice to guide developments and projects
 - Need to coordinate with local and county officials at least annually so that everyone is aware

In addition to the visual and physical surveys, the project team is also conducting an institutional survey, which includes a review of all county and local planning documents and policies. Kristen Ahlfeld stated that the review is necessary to determine what types of preservation and conservation practices are currently being used and also to determine where planning policies and practices may need to be beefed up. She referred to a matrix (attached) that has been compiled and requested that anyone with relevant information, documents, or a contact person at one of the municipalities should contact her. The institutional survey will be discussed in more detail at the February CMC meeting. Additional discussion items included the following.

- 5 municipalities are included in a Wild and Scenic Rivers Plan and should have special rivers caveats within their master plans
- Survey should also include overlay zones for river corridors
- Kristen should contact Matt Blake (SJBC/ALS) regarding byway open space planning
- Millville and Greenwich have sustainability plans

At the conclusion of the meeting Jim Klein mentioned that the details (date/time) for the next CMC meeting in February will be posted to the project web site. He also said that the notes and handouts from today's meeting will also be posted within the next week or so. He added that the group needs to start thinking about places and priorities to enhance the visitor experience. He said to be prepared to discuss current or upcoming projects related to the byway so that we can get them in the CMP.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

- Tom Scofield asked how important it is to grow the tourism industry? ***CMC members stated that in Cape May County, tourism is the number one industry, whereas in Cumberland County it is weak, and it will be hard to convince people to grow the industry. Salem County is embarking on a new tourism marketing program. Jim Klein added that we are going to need to look at potential sites where heritage or nature-based tourism is possible and determine whether or not those sites should be promoted. The Coastal Heritage Trail sites have all done this so that is a good starting point. He added that we will be talking about those types of things at the 4th and 6th meetings.***
- Jane Morton Galetto mentioned that there are lots of interesting places/resources located off the byway corridor (e.g., Wheaton Arts Center, Bridgeton). She added that they may add interpretive value so we cannot ignore them, but may not be worthy of a spur. We need to have these places support the byway. ***Jim Klein added that we may need to identify existing, visitor-ready facilities and gateway communities, both of which will help promote the byway in the early stages.***
- People want to know where to go and what to do. We may need to identify opportunities and then work together to cross-promote nearby and related visitor sites. Cold Spring Village provides maps and other lists of events (i.e., "things to do in South Jersey" guides).
- There may be opportunities to work with the main themes of the byway and then also identify sub-themes. Suggestions included:
 - Defense
 - Tolerance of different groups (e.g., Freeman/Quakers, Gouldtown as the oldest "colored" settlement in the U.S.
 - Delaware may be getting its first National Park – we can connect/link the two initiatives via the ferry; Fort Mott also a natural link
- Have you given any thought to people not starting at one end of the byway or the other? What if they start in the middle? ***Jim Klein responded by saying that at the CMC meeting on Heritage Tourism development we are going to need to talk about how people will be getting to the byway. Should we have gateways or kiosks with information about byway attractions? How can we use existing places and communities to draw people to the area?***

Coastal Heritage Trail sites are already marked and that can be a good starting point to build from.

- Have you distributed press releases after these meetings to get local coverage? ***Jim Klein stated that the project team has not distributed press releases after any of the CMC meetings; press releases were done to advertise for the first round of public workshops back in November. He agreed that we may need to do more to get more local coverage/involvement.***
- Jane Morton Galetto suggested that the project team upload their winning proposal for the Bayshore Heritage Byway CMP onto the project web site as it contains some really good examples of prior work, examples of strategies that could be adopted for the Bayshore, and how the CMP process works.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- CMC meeting #3 is scheduled for February 16th from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Millville Library.
- The project team will post the notes and handouts from today's meeting on the project web site.
- Kristen Ahlfeld will be following up with Jody Carrara, Matt Blake and others regarding the institutional survey.
- CMC members should review the visual and physical survey documents on the project web site prior to the February meeting.