



Memorandum

To: BHB Project Management Team
From: Sarah Couchman, L/KLA
Copied: Jim Klein, L/KLA
Date: November 30, 2011
Subject: Bayshore Heritage Byway Management Issues

At the first Corridor Management Committee (CMC) meeting for the Bayshore Heritage Byway (BHB) held on October 24, 2011 and again at a series of public meetings held in Salem, Cumberland and Cape May counties on November 16 and 17, 2011, participants raised numerous issues concerning the byway and its management. The following is a summary of these issues. The summary has been organized to reflect how these issues will be addressed at the remaining six CMC meetings. (*Italics indicate revisions to original meeting topics.*)

CMC Meeting #1: Corridor Definition and Vision and Goals

Held on October 24, 2011 – draft vision statement and goals included in separate memo
A route adjustment proposed for Lower and Middle Township will be acted upon by the Township Councils in December and an application filled out for the adjustment as soon as possible so that it can be included in the plan.

CMC Meeting #2: Preservation and Conservation Strategies

- Cooperation between county and municipal planning agencies
- Support for preservation esp. from elected officials
- High water table, flooding
- Outside investment in preserving open space
- Water access

CMC Meeting #3: Maintenance and Enhancement Strategies

- Curb appeal of local businesses
- Trash clean-up – coordination with Cumberland County Improvement Authority (as well as other State, County- or municipal-based clean up efforts, such as adopt-a-highway)
- Maintenance
- State upkeep of state properties
- Lack of “pride in place”
- Edges of towns are typically less scenic, how can they be enhanced over time through the byway program
- Need for unified look to publicly accessible trailheads, wildlife viewing areas, picnic areas and other public waysides (lots are available, but it is hard to know what is public)

CMC Meeting #4: Interpretive Development Strategies

- So many places visitors cannot see/access unless from water
- Coordinated interpretation needed among sites
- Integration of technology with interpretation (mobile applications to help tell stories)
- Hidden history needs to be uncovered

- Military history presents an interpretive opportunity
- Ephemeral qualities of natural heritage need to be made more understandable to the public (purple martin migration, horseshoe crabs) as does the role played by the unique geography of the bayshore

CMC Meeting #5: Context Sensitive Roadside Safety and Signage Strategies

- Primarily a driving route – needs to accommodate all modes of travel
- Need signage to visitor sites, especially where there is water access or an historic site off the byway
- Coastal Heritage Trail signage is worn out and no more funds are available – should these be incorporated into a byway signage program?
- Need consistent signage – start to create unified identity
- Concern about how visitation will or will not significantly increase traffic along route
- High speed of traffic and safety concerns on certain routes (NJ 347 mentioned)
- Concerns about the need to respect farm vehicles and bicycles

CMC Meeting #6: Visitor Facilities and Heritage Tourism Development

- Lack of visitor facilities, esp. restrooms, few places to stay overnight outside of Cape May, meals (need better information about where to eat and stay)
- Front-line hospitality at hotels, motels, b&b, museums, etc. need to be trained about the natural heritage and history of the whole region, so they can motivate visitors to stay longer and explore some of the hidden assets
- Opportunities for coordinated programming of events could help draw more heritage- and nature-based visitors
- Chicken-versus-egg conundrum – don't have hospitality businesses to support visitors; don't have visitors to support businesses
- Don't have critical mass of businesses to support one another
- No support from NJ DEP on permitting for business development – very difficult to navigate through the process

CMC Meeting #7: Draft Plan and Implementation Strategies

- Funding
- Stakeholders working together to strengthen infrastructure, economy, etc.
- Role of Coastal Heritage Trail partners – how to build upon past efforts without NPS role
- Future of federal and state funding will likely require more competitive projects and programs from a wider range of funding sources

Communication/Outreach

- Xenophobia
- Lack of interest in byway among local communities
- Cooperation between county and municipal planning agencies
- Involvement from business owners
- Farmers do not like tourists – dogs, litter, trespassing, etc.