



Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.

Memorandum

To: Corridor Management Committee
From: Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.
Date: January 13, 2012
Subject: Bayshore Heritage Byway Development of DRAFT Vision and Goals

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, attendees were asked to participate in a visioning exercise. They were asked a series of questions designed to gain a better understanding of what they felt it would take to make the byway a success. Attendees also identified byway assets or “must-see” sites/attractions as well as byway challenges or areas in need of attention.

Based on the feedback from the CMC and the public, the language below will be used to facilitate the development of a vision statement and goals at the second CMC meeting. This memo includes

- existing vision-oriented language from NJ DOT, the National Scenic Byways Program Coastal Heritage Trail communications;
- excerpts from meeting discussions and comment cards that include potential vision and goal statements; and
- recommended language for goals to help guide the content of each of the upcoming meetings.

A draft vision statement will be crafted based upon the input at CMC Meeting #2 and incorporated into the draft plan.

Existing language containing vision-oriented statements:

- **Bayshore Heritage Byway (NJDOT web page)**
The 122-mile Bayshore Heritage Byway captures the unique natural and historical landscapes along southern New Jersey's "western shore" in Salem, Cumberland and Cape May counties. The cultural, natural and historic assets along the Delaware River and Delaware Bayshore offer many opportunities to explore this area. This Byway tells the story of communities and cultures that were dependant on the area's natural resources.

With views of the Delaware River and Delaware Bay, the Bayshore Heritage Byway displays the centuries of connection between the communities and surrounding marshlands, farm fields, and historic towns. The route takes travelers through historic cities such as Salem, Bridgeton and Cape May. Over the centuries, Bayshore communities have been dependant on the region's industries based on natural resources include fishing, trapping, crabbing, oyster and caviar processing, shipbuilding, iron making, milling, glass making and salt hay farming in addition to traditional agriculture.

- **National Scenic Byway Program Web site (www.byways.org)**

Enjoy stunning views of the Delaware River and Bay, farm land, historic architecture and wildlife along the Bayshore Heritage Byway. This 123.98 mile byway runs through Salem, Cumberland and Cape May Counties.

- **Coastal Heritage Trail – NPS webpage**

Take the time, explore this Trail of discovery.

The Trail will show you roads less traveled where you can find historic villages, migrating and resident bald eagles, miles of sandy beaches. This auto-trail stretches nearly 300 miles along New Jersey's shore and bays. Explore the Trail's five regions and you'll find the nation's oldest operating lighthouse; the town where revolutionaries burned British tea; and the state's official tall ship.

Beautiful environments and awesome migrations

You can see vast migrations of shore birds every spring and fall or watch resident birds in their native habitat. Bird watchers can see bald eagles, osprey, and heron in the wetlands. Kayaks and canoes can take you through freshwater streams, forests, and white cedar bogs.

Discover how New Jersey's towns evolved from their unique coastal resources.

Small villages grew into prosperous towns by providing produce and products to big city markets. Lighthouses were built to help sailors safely reach those markets. Take a drive today and you can see schooners on the bays, fresh produce in farm markets, and lighthouses guiding the mariner.

Fishing is fun for the entire family.

You can enjoy the coastal habitats by fishing, canoeing, hiking, and boating. New Jersey's coast has long been a place for recreation and artistic or spiritual inspiration. Visitors with disabilities can find [accessible](#) viewing platforms and boardwalk trails. Contact our individual [destinations](#) for details.

- **South Jersey Bayshore Coalition**

Heritage

(Photo of a white rocking chair on a front porch)

Many tidewater towns in the Bayshore region are snapshots of a different era. Greenwich and Cape May are examples of using historic resources to support heritage tourism. The Bayshore towns of Bridgeton and Greenwich are listed on the National Historic Register, and sponsor frequent heritage-oriented events.

The Bayshore Discovery Project in Bivalve, Dutch-Neck Village in Bridgeton, and Wheaton Village in Millville enhance tourism with world class exhibits of Bayshore heritage. Historic industries and towns can blend with the new, and still retain their unique "Down Jersey" character. With thoughtful planning, we can protect the valued Bayshore traditions and lifestyles.

The South Jersey Bayshore Coalition is the sponsoring organization for the Bayshore Heritage Byway, a 123-mile route that captures the unique natural and historical landscapes along southern New Jersey's western shore. A map and directions for the Byway can be found on the NJ Department of Transportation website.

Development of a Bayshore Heritage Byway Vision Statement

A strong vision statement should have three basic parts:

- Words that capture the sense of place and what is special about the area
- Words that capture the type of experience associated with that sense of place
- Action statements that express the future - “the byway will ...”

The following key points have been extracted from discussions at the first CMC Meeting and the Public Meetings and should be considered for inclusion in a vision statement.

THE BYWAY’S SENSE OF PLACE OR ASSETS AND STRENGTHS*Discover/explore nature*

- vast estuarine wetlands and bayshore dunes provide habitat to animal species ranging from horseshoe crabs to monarch butterflies to a variety of shorebirds
- breathtaking sunsets
- large, continuous tracts of open space; meadows, wetlands, fields
- bay tributaries, creeks and wetlands perfect for paddling
- Elsinboro Point
- Cape May diamonds
- Lake Audrey

Discover/explore heritage and culture

- patterned brick houses
- nineteenth century sites critical to the underground railroad
- small villages with rural character and rich history
- oyster industry brought to life at the Discovery Project and aboard the AJ Meerwald Schooner
- East Point Lighthouse
- sand mining and glass factory
- farm markets, wineries, agricultural activities
- Hancock House, Quaker meeting houses, Brad Street Presbyterian Church, Market Street in Historic Salem, Fishing Creek School , Historical Cold Spring Village
- military history: NAS Wildwood, Vietnam War Museum, World War II Lookout Tower, Concrete Ship, Fort Mott
- Town bank – first county seat in Cape May
- Indian burial grounds

EXPERIENCE STATEMENTS

- The byway weaves nationally significant resources and stories together as it traverses a largely natural and agricultural landscape.
- The byway connects community members from three counties – Salem, Cumberland and Cape May – and 20 municipalities.
- The byway is an opportunity for visitors to experience natural wonders; bask in breathtaking sunsets; and reflect on local, regional and national history.
- The beauty, heritage, and hospitality of South Jersey’s Delaware Bayshore will entice visitors to linger, learn and enjoy, bringing new found vitality to the byway’s communities.
- South Jersey is the Garden State.

- The byway offers an unparalleled diversity of habitats from the Bay to the Pinelands, deciduous forests to freshwater and salt marshes, rivers and creeks to sand dunes.
- The byway tells the stories of communities and cultures dependent on the land and water, and shows visitors how that relationship continues today.

ACTION STATEMENTS

- These communities treasure the resources in their back yards and want to protect and preserve them.
- They also want others to learn about and appreciate the qualities that make the Delaware Bayshore region significant.
- Communities along the route want to provide for the protection and maintenance of those resources unique to the Bayshore, and share these resources with the world.
- The byway will build regional unity among residents, neighboring communities, and counties, fostering a sense of 'pride in place'.

Recommended Goals

The following draft goals are based on the input provided at the first CMC meeting.

Conserve and Preserve the Byway's Intrinsic Qualities *(to be discussed at Meeting #2)*

Develop and implement a community-based and collaborative approach to conservation and preservation that focuses on the Bayshore region in a manner that respects the rights and responsibilities of private property owners while insuring that the byway corridor's character defining features will be preserved and maintained.

Enhance the Experience of Visiting the Byway *(to be discussed at Meeting #3)*

Establish the byway as a destination by developing a strong identity through consistent signage; visitor facilities; a unified, context-sensitive aesthetic; and community support of byway management and maintenance.

Expand Heritage and Nature-based Economic Development Opportunities *(to be discussed at Meeting #4)*

Utilize the byway and New Jersey's business development resources to help the region build its capacity to attract and retain those travelers with an interest in the Bayshore's rich natural and cultural heritage and develop marketable programs and activities, along with expanded business opportunities, that increase the comfort level of visitors – such as good food, nice places to stay, a more welcoming community appearance – and keep them coming back time and time again.

Uncover the Stories Depicting the Bayshore's Rich Natural Heritage and Community Life *(to be discussed at Meeting #5)*

Establish a new interpretive program that builds upon the interpretive resources of the Coastal Heritage Trail (originally developed by the National Park Service) and ties together the stories associated with the Bayshore's natural heritage and historical places in order to establish a seamless, coherent, and educational travel experience.

Increase the Range and Safety of Travel Choices and Opportunities *(to be discussed at Meeting #6)*

Enhance the quality and safety of the byway-related travel experience for all modes of transportation by expanding the range of travel opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as those who use public transportation and by utilizing context sensitive approaches to address future roadway safety and capacity projects.