

**BAYSHORE HERITAGE BYWAY CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN
CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING #1**

MEETING SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: October 24, 2011

TIME: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Luciano Conference Center, Cumberland County College

ATTENDEES:

Name	Agency/Organization		
Joe Fedora	Alloway Township		
Jody Carrara	ANJEC		
Cheryl Reardon	ANJEC/SJBC		
Meghan Wren	Bayshore Discovery Project		
Liz Shay	Cape May Point		
Carl Schupp	Cape May Point		
Lillian Armstrong	Citizens United for the Maurice River and its Tributaries		
Jane Morton Galetto	Citizens United for the Maurice River and its Tributaries		
Ken McGill	Commercial Township Environmental Committee		
Sharon Mollick	Cumberland County		
Matt Pisarski	Cumberland County		
Kim Gauntt	Cumberland County Recreation		
Bob Campbell	Downe Township Committee		
Sally Birdsall	Greenwich		
Michael Beck	Lower Township		
Bill Galestock	Lower Township Planning Division		
Kathy Ireland	Maurice River Township		
John Flynn	NJ DEP – Green Acres Program		
Cindy Bloom-Cronin	NJDOT		
Jim Klein	Lardner Klein		
Sarah Couchman	Lardner Klein		
Kristen Ahlfeld	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.		

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 the Project

Jim Klein, the Project Manager of the Lardner/Klein (L/K) Project Team, gave a brief overview of the meeting agenda, the byway corridor management planning process, and provided some recent examples of scenic byway plans or heritage plans that L/K had completed. He mentioned that the purpose of today's meeting would be to start defining the corridor and to start formulating the goals and objectives of the CMP and the overall vision for the byway.

He mentioned that the CMC needs to determine what they would like the Bayshore Heritage Byway to become over time and stated that the group needed to start thinking about:

- Preservation and conservation strategies along the route, over time.
- Visitor experience and enjoyment.
- The travel route – is it ready for visitors?
- How many visitors is appropriate to the Bayshore region?
- How can we help visitors find all of the unique places along the Bayshore?

Jim also stated that by achieving a national designation (National Scenic Byway or All American Road), the region may be eligible to receive additional funding from the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) for enhancements and improvements to the byway route.

Jim provided the following examples of scenic byway corridor management plans that his firm has worked on, each highlighting different aspects of the planning process:

- Millstone Valley Scenic Byway – one of two nationally designated byways in New Jersey featuring the region's history
- Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway – CMP identified conservation priorities and landscape enhancement plans; successfully collaborated with Delaware Greenways to nominate for national designation
- Maryland National Historic Road – one segment of six-state All-American Road; CMP led to \$1.6 million in first two years for interpretive installations, design guidelines, marketing programs and facility enhancements
- Journey Through Hallowed Ground – three-state byway from Monticello to Gettysburg; CMP identified management priorities and an action plan for implementation – partnerships and commitments from three state DOTs, numerous local governments and other organizations were critical to implementation

Stakeholder/Public Outreach

Kristen Ahlfeld, of Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. gave a brief overview of the stakeholder and public outreach processes. She explained that the CMC was going to serve as an advisory committee that will guide the project and provide input to the project team at key milestones. She also mentioned that the meetings were going to be as interactive as possible, sometimes having participants break-out into smaller groups, so that more focused discussions could take place. Several different types of outreach techniques will be used:

- Public workshops;
- Interactive project website that will be updated to include the most recent project information;
- Comment boxes at all meetings;
- Online meetings – for those individuals who would like to participate but have a conflict on a specific meeting day.

Kristen stressed the importance of participating in the meetings and requested that the participants pass along contact information for additional people who were not in attendance today.

Byway Corridor Management Planning Process

Sarah Couchman of Larder/Klein presented an overview of the steps that would be conducted to complete the corridor management plan for the Bayshore Heritage Byway.

1. Inventory and Assessment – required for National Scenic Byway designation. A visual inventory of the byway was conducted in September. The byway was divided into character areas so that the byway qualities could be assessed more comprehensively. All character areas were given a high or low rating, which helps to better define which areas should be targeted for enhancements or protection/preservation strategies.
2. Protection and preservation strategies. Will be covered at the next CMC meeting.
3. Enhancement strategies.
4. Interpreting the byway route – what stories/history makes the places along the byway unique?
5. Devise safety and transportation strategies – how can we accommodate all modes of transportation safely along the byway?
6. Develop heritage and nature-based tourism – we will need to determine the appropriate level of visitorship for the byway.
7. Establish an action plan – this will be a “live” document that will include strategies/recommendations, implementing partners or agencies, and potential funding sources or strategies.

Defining the Corridor

Sarah continued her presentation by stating that the byway is not “just the road”. When we talk about the byway, we are also including the view from the road, the places along the road that are related to the byway theme, as well as the presence of regional resources. She then began to identify key issues associated with defining the byway:

- Need to think in terms of the larger route;
- The complexity of the route (we may need to think about ways to assist travelers with route navigation);
- The byway cannot accommodate all modes of transportation because of the current road conditions;
- NPS Coastal Heritage Trail – we will need to determine the status of this facility. We may need to be prepared to develop strategies to partner/maintain some of the sites along this facility;
- Coordination with other touring routes – we need to think about ways to cut down on the confusion;
- Level of tourism – what is the appropriate level for communities and infrastructure?

Byway Assets, Challenges, and Successes

Each of the meeting attendees were given green, yellow, and blue index cards. Attendees were them asked to write down their thoughts on the following:

- Green card – byway assests
- Yellow card – byway challenges
- Blue card – how the byway will look in 10 years. Or how they would measure the success of the byway in 10 years.

The following summarizes the results of that exercise:

Assests	Challenges	Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The byway will put South Jersey in the spotlight • Provides opportunities to educate the public • Potential to bring funding and other economic possibilities to the region • Rural character, water, marshlands, meadows, open space; byway is unparalleled in rural quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is the money going to come from? • Primarily a driving route; byway needs to accommodate all travelers (car, bike, walking, boat) • State upkeep of state property • Getting people here; lack of transportation alternatives and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the Bay side has its own identity (like Atlantic Coast/”Shore” side) • Outside investment in preserving open space • Better lifestyles in byway towns; benefits to local residents, taxpayers, and businesses • Everyone thinks of the Bayshore as New Jersey

Assests	Challenges	Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History/historic structures • Unique wildlife opportunities (bird watching horseshoe crabs) • Small, village lifestyle; no sprawl • Eco- and heritage-based tourism (“defense of the Bay”, Japanese internment site, Quaker heritage, Underground Railroad, Indian burial grounds, Revolutionary War skirmish site) • Water recreation/maritime culture (AJ Meerwald, Bayshore Discovery, boating, fishing, Port of Cape May) • One of the last “great drives” • Large, contiguous tracts of open space • Keeping the “garden” of the Garden State • Eating facilities • Agricultural activities, views, farm markets 	<p>infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance (and funding) • Trash clean-up • Lack of restrooms • Balance of ecological and economic needs • Xenophobia – not culture of hospitality, local attitudes not visitor-friendly • Need to be creative, incentivize • Cooperation between County planning and zoning boards (need to coordinate) • Difficult to establish a small business • Agreement on byway route; inability to satisfy “all” • Salem has so many wonderful historic resources but it may not be “comfortable” place for visitors • Curb appeal of local businesses • Local support for further preservation; local residents support it, but elected officials do not • Integrating low-income communities (Salem, Bridgeton) with middle-class tourism • So many places visitors 	<p>(not just the Shore); a new appreciation of South Jersey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater “pride in place” (better maintenance, more historic sites/societies are open for longer hours) • Consistent signage – start to unify and develop a shared identity • More educational programs and visitors centers • Protection of rural character; aesthetic quality is not further degraded, but enhanced • Positive financial experience for involved townships; more economic activity • The byway builds regional unity; unity of perception of the area • Propelling national recognition (National Heritage Area) • Stakeholders continuing to work together to strengthen infrastructure, economy, etc. • Traffic is not significantly increased along the byway or in towns • Attraction of entrepreneurs and other businesses • See people out of their cars, walking and biking and staying

Assests	Challenges	Success
	<p>cannot see/access unless they are out on the water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of interest within local communities • High water table, flooding • No support from NJDEP on septic and permitting • Don't have a critical mass of businesses to support each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local enthusiasm for the byway • New/more businesses that are tourism-related

The project team will use the information/input gathered during the meeting to develop the goals and objectives of the CMP as well as the overall vision for the byway.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

- Is the route etched in stone? Where the route comes through Lower Township it misses a niche of ecotourism. Could we consider having the route come off Route 47 to Bayshore Road instead? ***Jim Klein stated that the current byway route came from a designation study done almost 4 years ago by NJDOT. He also mentioned that the byway route does not need to go to every place and that we can market other destinations that may be located off the actual route. For the CMP, we will be starting with the route that has already been designated, however, recommendations regarding spurs or a different route could be put in the CMP.***
- Downe Township has always supported ecotourism, birding, etc. Plans have been done in the past, and nothing ever pans out. All of the different activities put a strain on the township infrastructure. There needs to be financial support for the recommendations. Right now we do not receive any money for trash collection or public bathrooms. How are we going to handle more people without more money? ***Jim Klein said that the plan can identify those issues and then come up with recommendations. He said that the CMC can help to identify places where visitor infrastructure is needed and then we can put them into the recommendations of the plan. He said that on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, several people came together and built a seasonal structure for restrooms because they were experiencing similar problems.***
- Each township committee along the byway passed a resolution supporting the current byway corridor. We had many meetings with township representatives to get us to where we are today.
- We need infrastructure to support the byway and increased visitors.
- The state needs to pay for open space.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Cheryl Reardon will distribute the dates, times, and locations of the November public workshops.
- Meeting attendees will contact Cheryl Reardon, Jim, Klein, or Cindy Bloom-Cronin to add additional people to the stakeholder list.

Cheryl Reardon (856) 769-4220 anjec.cheryl@gmail.com	Jim Klein Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C. 815 N. Royal Street, Suite 200 Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 739-0972 Jim.klein@lardnerklein.com	Cindy Bloom-Cronin NJ DOT 1035 Parkway Avenue PO Box 600 Trenton, NJ 08625 (609) 530-5676 Cindy.Bloom-Cronin@dot.state.nj.us
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- First series of public meetings will be held on November 16 and 17.

Cumberland County
Wednesday, November 16, 6-8 pm at the Maurice River Township Municipal Building (590 Main Street, Leesburg, NJ 08327)

Cape May County
Thursday, November 17, 1-3 pm at the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Building (355 Courthouse-South Dennis Road, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210)

Salem County
Thursday, November 17, 6-8 pm at the Old Salem County Courthouse (83 Market Street, Salem, NJ 08079)
- CMC meeting #2 is scheduled for January 19, 2012.