



Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.

Memorandum:

To: Advisory Committee and Interested Stakeholders
From: Jim Klein
Date: 3 February 2010
Subject: PA Delaware River Scenic Byway Handout #1
AC Meeting #5 Agenda and Discussion Items

Tentative Agenda

- 7:00 pm Overview and Summary of Byway Planning to Date
7:15 pm Implementing the Byway Management Plan
Review the overall strategy table and options for establishing a byway organization
Review community design and traffic calming concepts
8:30 pm Discussion of next steps for the byway planning effort (handout hard copies of the Draft Plan and discuss review procedures (EAC, Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors)
9:00 pm Adjourn

Alternative Approaches to Establishing a Regional Byway Organization

Byway Development and Management Tasks

Byway management involves the following activities:

- Seek endorsements and recognition for the Byway to establish and maintain its credibility as a quality place to visit, including making application to the Federal Highway Administration for National Scenic Byway designation, if desired
- Serve as the “byway keeper” with the role of encouraging property owners, utility companies, highway departments, and others with management responsibility to consider the goals of the byway and work to proactively conserve and enhance the qualities of the byway as part of their daily management and stewardship activities
- Seek to coordinate conservation and preservation actions among local and regional organizations and agencies to ensure that the Byway retains its qualities over time
- Pursuit of outside funding to implement the plan recommendations focusing on the high priority recommendations
- Organizing events and activities associated with the byway and working with other groups to coordinate events and activities taking place along the byway
- Promote the byway as a heritage- or nature-based tourism destination to those with an interest in historic sites, bicycling, canoeing/kayaking, and nature study in consultation with the State and local offices of tourism
- Serve as the primary point of contact for information about the byway
- Work with municipal and non-profit organizations to promote volunteer opportunities along the byway especially for maintenance and upkeep of the right-of-way

Examples of Byway Organizations with Similar Issues to DRVSB

Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway (statewide non-profit organization)

This Delaware byway was designated as a National Scenic Byway in 2005 and is similar to the Delaware River Valley in that it is comprised of an natural, agricultural, and

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historical landscape setting at the edge of a metropolitan area (Wilmington) facing similar growth and development pressures, and is working to expand to two states. The Delaware portion of the byway is being managed on an interim basis by Delaware Greenways, Inc., "a statewide nonprofit agency committed to the preservation and enhancement of Delaware's natural, scenic, historic, cultural and recreational resources. The organization works to accomplish this by preserving open space and greenways, increasing opportunities for walking and bicycling and creating more livable communities." Delaware Greenways, Inc. manages multiple byways throughout the state

The organization is supported by memberships, wrote and received multiple byway grants to prepare the corridor management plan, a companion landscape management plan, and for byway facilities. Their advisory committee consists of representatives of each jurisdiction, major civic organizations, neighborhoods, and major institutions. They formed an executive committee to represent the large advisory body. The regional tourism office supports the byway with marketing and promotional efforts, including a presence on their web page. The regional planning organization, WILMAPCO, also played a role in helping to carry out the corridor management planning effort by promoting the planning and designation effort on their web site, and assisting Delaware Greenways with securing and implementing the original byway planning grant

Over the long term, they are looking to an existing non-profit such as the Kennett Pike Association, to take over the role as the byway organization, but Delaware Greenways is providing that role on an interim basis, including applying for grants and managing existing grants.

Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway, Western Massachusetts

Jacob's Ladder Trail is a 100-year old Scenic Drive started as one of the first crossings over the Berkshire Mountains in Western Massachusetts. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) of West Springfield, Mass., the agency responsible for the Trail's implementation, organizes the Jacob's Ladder Trail Advisory Committee, which is made up of community, state and regional officials, and local business representatives. The Commission secured over \$1.3 million from the Scenic Byway Program of the Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991) funds for planning, design and construction of activities on the Trail (Scenic Byway Program provides planning, design and implementation of improvements in corridor maintenance, safety improvements, inter-modal use, recreation enhancement, historical preservation, and tourism amenities)

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has taken the following two key measures to ensure that the Trail is a viable investment:

- Instituting a long-term corridor management plan that outlines guidelines for land use, landscape, cultural and historic preservation, and highway safety
- Establishing Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway, Inc. as formal, non-profit corridor management organization

The organization published an attractive guide to bicycling Jacobs Ladder Trail. Through the years 1994-1999, several follow-up documents were prepared to implement the byway management plan:

- Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway Development Guidebook Jun-95
- Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway Improvements Plan: Phase II Jun-95
- Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway Historic Postcards Jun-99
- Jacob's Ladder Trail Off-road Bicycle & Multi-use Trail Map (East & West) Jun-99
- Jacob's Ladder Trail Vegetation Management Plan

The organization was recently successful (2006) in obtaining 164,000 dollars to develop signage and wayfinding along the byway.

They are not designated as a National Scenic Byway but manage the route as one and take's advantage of its programs.

Millstone Valley Scenic Byway, New Jersey

The Byway was designated as a National Scenic Byway in 2009. The sponsor was the Millstone Valley Preservation Alliance. Their focus is more preservation/conservation oriented. They have received multiple grants working closely with NJDOT for byway facilities including work on restoring a bridge tenders house along the Delaware and Raritan Canal as a visitor center.

The plan was developed in consultation with a wide range of local agencies (multiple townships and Somerset County), which later expanded to include an additional Township and County to the south towards Princeton, NJ. They market events extensively along the byway through a blog (<http://raritan-millstonevalleyevents.blogspot.com/>), which is very effective at reaching their target audience of local, and regional conservation/preservation groups, and local history buffs. The Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance is the host for the blog. They also use the blog for broadcasting alerts about preservation and conservation issues along the Byway.

Options for a Permanent Management Entity

Based on these examples and the existing organizations operating within the Delaware River Valley Scenic Byway corridor, there are three basic options for forming a permanent management entity for the byway. Such an entity is needed if the Township and its partners wish to gain the economic and community benefits of byway management. It is also needed for gaining designation as a National Scenic Byway from the Federal Highway Administration and for the administration of any grants and other funding that the Byway might receive as it implements the corridor management plan. The three options include:

- 1) Utilize an existing local government entity or authority as the management entity that would be able to address the extended Byway on a regional basis – this option would carry forward the existing advisory committee as an ad hoc advisory committee to provide ongoing input and volunteer support to the workings of the organization. Potential entities might be Northampton County or the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.
- 2) Utilize an existing non-profit organization as the management entity – this option would require that an existing organization take on the management of the byway. It most likely would require an amendment to the existing by-laws of the organization to either extend their interests to include all of Delaware River Valley Scenic Byway including what might be designated in the future. An existing organization would then form a standing committee that would serve (which could become a subcommittee or standing committee of the organization). Examples might be Discover Lehigh, or the Martins Jacoby Watershed Association, depending upon the emphasis of the Byway (that is more focused on conservation with nature-based tourism as a tangible benefit of this effort; or more focused on nature-, heritage- and agri-based tourism with conservation as one of the foundations upon which that tourism is based
- 3) Create a new 501c3 organization as the management entity – this option would require the formation of a new not-for-profit corporation with its own by-laws and board of directors and management committee. It could be done as a phased approach that follows either of the two options above.

Management Committee

No matter which entity takes on the leadership role in the organization, a permanent management committee should be formed that includes representatives from the various stakeholder groups with an interest in the byway – including representatives from the Township and, at a minimum Townships with an active interest in the Byway. In addition, the committee should continue to involve County and regional government and organizations, PennDOT and other state agencies with an interest in the byway, and at-large members that represent the various civic and community organizations, and that generally represent the interests of private landowners in the corridor. The management committee is needed to oversee the activities of the organization and ensure that the byway continues to seek the advice of the public, which it serves. The roles and responsibilities should be outlined in the bylaws of the organization, or in any amendment to existing bylaws or policies that are used to structure the work of the management entity. An executive committee should be formed of the management committee as chosen by its members.

Phasing of Organizational and Byway Development:

As the Byway grows, so should the organization. We recommend three distinct phases of growth.

Establishment Phase (initial 3-5 year period)

Continue to manage the Byway as an ad hoc committee of interested Township, agency and civic/organizational representatives. The primary actions that this ad hoc group should focus upon include:

1. Establish a regionally scaled Byway from Easton to Delaware Water Gap:
 - Establish and initial “home room” for the Byway groups ad hoc activities including someone that is willing to host and maintain a byway development web site on an interim basis until a permanent home can be found
 - Communicate with adjoining townships about the benefits of byway designation and seek endorsements of the corridor management plan from involved local and state government entities (presentation to be included with CMP)
 - Seek state designations for the Byway from Township, Borough and City governments for the Route 611 corridor throughout Northampton County (Williams Township and Easton to the Delaware Water Gap)
 - Seek Scenic Byway Program funding to extend the corridor management plan to cover the expanded Byway
 - Seek National Scenic Byway Designation – next designation period is unknown (depends upon reauthorization of the current SAFETEA-LU Federal Transportation Bill)
 - Establish a point of contact and process for input and review of roadway-related plans, programs and projects initiated by PennDOT, Northampton County, or the Township that may affect the Byway
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2. Seek funding for a small museum cooperative touring and museum management program for the extended byway region (PHMC due Jan 31) and use the resulting event/touring program as demonstration project for the benefits of developing the Byway
3. Seek Scenic Byway Program funding for the development of a regional interpretive master plan/visual and graphic identity plan coupled with initial applications and installations
 - Development and printing of a byway visitor guide and maps

- Development of mobile and/or technology assisted interpretive installations
 - Development of outdoor exhibits at priority sites
 - Development of initial seasonal events (small museum tour, farm to table event, Delaware River activity or event, etc.)
 - Installation of related exhibits in the Township Welcome Center
4. Use the extended Byway as a means of organizing regional partners in the development of hospitality training program and a farm-to-table program linking Delaware River Valley farms to restaurants and farmers markets in Easton, Lafayette College, and other regional destinations
 5. Pursue Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grant (C2P2) funding for the development of a detailed master plan and final design for the footpath system to connect interpretive sites along the Byway, including pedestrian safety measures such as traffic calming. (NOTE: workshop on February 3rd in morning see this link to register http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/Calendar/view_event.asp?CalendarID=17206&Location=List)
 6. Pursue funding with partner organizations for additional agricultural easements within the Agricultural Security Area in the Township (this is also a potential Scenic Byway Program Grant for FY 12 – applications typically out in March 2011)

Development Phase (5-10 year period)

Upon identification of permanent management entity and the designation of the Byway as a National Scenic Byway or other similar recognition program, develop the following projects and programs

7. Based upon the master plan for interpretive development and visual/graphic identity, establish a visitor-friendly web page (preferably linked or part of Discover Lehigh Valley web site) including visitor information for the regional byway with regular updates and a listing of events
8. Preparation, installation and publication of updated byway touring maps/guides, interpretive materials, and interpretive panels, visitor information kiosk (s), and wayfinding (based on results of detailed interpretive/visual and graphic identity plan)
9. Develop a physical design master plan for traffic calming (if not part of footpath system) and pedestrian safety measures in Martins Creek and Riverton (add other village areas from other communities that may evolve from the extended corridor management plan, if applicable)
10. Develop a “green highway” demonstration project for cooperative water quality benefits for farm and roadway runoff
11. Expand opportunities for Delaware River related events and activities using the Township’s Welcome Center as a host site for events (such as a concert series, river touring activities, bicycle touring events, or farm to table events)

Sustaining Phase (year 11 and beyond)

The overall vision and goals of the byway will lead towards the establishment of a sustainable byway over time through implementation of the planned projects noted above and the establishment of the following ongoing programmatic and management activities

Goal 1 Associate the Byway with the Delaware River and its larger regional context

The Byway will have the greatest potential for economic and community benefit when: it is extended and expanded and becomes a nationally-recognized or designated Byway for both sides of the Delaware River from the Delaware Bay to the Delaware Water Gap

Goal 2 Conserve the Rural Character of the Byway

The Byway will have the greatest potential for economic and community benefit when: building upon the Township's (and other local government's) ongoing planning and preservation efforts for open space, agricultural land preservation, watershed management, and historic preservation are significantly implemented to conserve farms, forests, and community character along the Byway and the Delaware River

Goal 3: Preserve Historic Resources and Community Character along the Byway

The Byway will have the greatest potential for economic and community benefit when: awareness of the Township's historic resources and rural character is expanded through special event tours and local recognition programs leading towards the development of a historic preservation plan focused on preserving the historic resources and community character of the Byway

Goal 4: Maintain the Character Defining Features of the Roadway

The Byway will have the greatest potential for economic and community benefit when: PennDOT and the Township (and other local governments) have adopted innovative approaches for balancing the wide range of needs for all roadway users including commuters, agricultural, heritage visitors, bicyclists, pedestrians, and neighbors while maintaining the character defining features of the Byway context.

Goal 5: Use the Byway as a Tool for Economic Development

The Byway will have the greatest potential for economic and community benefit when: the Byway has sufficient attractions, things to do, and places to stay to extend visitor stays and has linked those sites together by coordinating the storytelling, interpretation, event programming and education associated with the region's agricultural and Delaware River heritage with its opportunities for nature-based recreation and related "farm to table" tours and tastings.