



Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.

Memorandum:

To: Delaware River Valley Scenic Byway Advisory Committee and Interested Stakeholders
From: Jim Klein
Date: July 19, 2010
Subject: Handout: Draft Vision and Goals for the Byway Plan

At our initial advisory committee and public meeting, attendees were asked about the byway's assets and challenges, and what it was that would make the byway a success. The following is a list of potential phrases and ideas generated from that meeting that have been utilized to shape the included initial draft vision and goals statement. (Note that the phrases are transcribed verbatim from the note cards, except interpretations made in brackets.)

Preservation/Conservation

- *Preserve existing pristine areas*
- *Keep things the same environment[ally]*
- *Truly preserve more land*
- *Thank you [the farmers?] for your past efforts in keeping our township beautiful*
- *A lovely rural spot to visit. Beautiful productive farms. This place is a treasure! And only 1 ½ hours from NYC*
- *Wish it was as nice as it was 20 yrs. ago*
- *A quaint country road that looks like something from the good old days of 2010*
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Community Development and Heritage Tourism

- *I would hope that the Byway includes a village with a vibrant life of shops, cafes, and sustainable businesses- like a village from the past*
- *Develop B&B tourism*
- *Create an agro-historical, cultural destination*
- *Encourage unity among the residents*
- *Growth of agri business along the byway*
Preservation of the farmers by promoting buy fresh-buy local
- *A byway that extends north to Portland Borough, Delaware Water Gap through the National Park*
- *A quality, safer place*
- *Increase general values of Real Estate by helping keep Real Estate taxes (low?)*
- *Generate jobs*
- *Help farmers exist*
- *My perfect vision would appear just as it does today but with enough business from tourism to help sustain the farming community.*

Transportation/Traffic

- *Increase highway safety*
- *Better traffic*
- *A continuous sidewalk system*
- *regulate traffic flow*
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Enhancement

- *Enhance the beauty along the byway with planned tree and other landscape plantings.*

From original application (2005?):***THE STORY OF THE BYWAY***

The vision for the Delaware River Scenic Byway in Pennsylvania is a unique travel experience which connects the traveler with the natural resources, history, and industrial roots of Lower Mount Bethel Township. This byway is unique in that it does not rely on large museums, historic sites, or gardens to appeal to audiences; rather, the rural landscape character of its riverfront, rolling hills, winding roads, and natural beauty are attractions in-and-of themselves. The byway's natural and scenic resources are complimented by its archeological, historical, and industrial heritage. This historic landscape, with its vast open farmland, small crossroad villages, Native American sites, and industrial ruins and buildings, offers travelers a rich and varied experience.

Taken as a whole, these diverse resources tell a compelling story of man's interaction with the land and the co-existence of natural beauty with historic sites and industrial development. Referred to here as "Nature, History, and Machine," the special story of the DRSB begins with Native Americans and traces the legacy of eighteenth century settlers, communities, industries, ferries, and farmsteads. Nineteenth century homes, industrial plants, mills, kilns, quarries, and bridges, along with twentieth century buildings, industries, bridges, and even a World War II airport, exist in harmony with the splendor of the byway's natural landscapes. A primary goal of the CMP will be to ensure that changes along the byway support and enhance its current character and story. Designation as a National Scenic Byway will encourage visitors to explore the byway resources and encourage travelers to learn more about the history and significance of the Lehigh Valley.

Recommended Vision Statement for CMP (first draft - 2010)

The Delaware River Valley Scenic Byway in Pennsylvania links the Delaware and Lehigh Canal Heritage Corridor to the south with the Delaware Water Gap to the north to help preserve and enhance its farms, forests, and historic villages and celebrate the Delaware River's natural and cultural heritage. The byway will help to tell the story of the Delaware River's unique heritage by helping visitors and residents alike to better understand the layers of nature and culture that have formed the river valley and which can be readily seen in the landscape of Lower Mount Bethel Township.

The Byway planning effort will help the Township keep things "pretty much the same way they are today" – by building upon the long tradition of land stewardship that has led to its recognition as a scenic area in the first place. The Byway plan will respect the private property rights of all landowners and business interests. The Byway will help to preserve and promote the area's agriculture and by leveraging more resources for agricultural land preservation in support of farmers and through farm to table tours and programs that highlight locally grown and produced food and wine from the region.

As part of a larger regional byway and community development effort, the Township's historic villages will evolve to bring back "a vibrant life of shops, cafes, and sustainable businesses- like a village from the past". Heritage-based tourism, agri-tourism and eco-tourism, based on the heritage of the everyday working landscape, will provide the engine to support small business development and to help sustain the rural farms and small, historic villages of the region.

Examples of Vision Statements (from related byways in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware):

Vision for the Millstone Valley Scenic Byway (New Jersey)

Working together and inspired by the regional significance of this rare oasis of natural beauty and historic integrity, Byway enthusiasts are working hard to keep this landscape pretty much the way it is today, only better – preserving the most important parts of the Byway and enhancing areas in need of a little sprucing up. The Byway will make it easier for visitors to find and learn about the rich layers of history – from the earliest Dutch settlement through skirmishes of the Revolutionary War to the canal era which is still evident in the many authentic historic sites and districts found along the route.

The Byway serves as a regional connector linking together historic sites, natural areas trails and greenways forming a major north-south green spine for Somerset County and beyond. Automobiles, bicyclists and pedestrians co-exist along narrow roads and trails winding through and along the Delaware and Raritan Canal and its neighboring farms and woodlands. Canoes and kayaks glide through the waters while watching the wildlife and appreciating the serene qualities of the Millstone River and Delaware and Raritan Canal. Throughout its 25-mile length the layered history of the Millstone Valley is revealed through a coordinated series of interpretive stops, walking tours, and guides designed to teach both visitors and residents alike about the qualities that make this place truly unique and special.

Vision for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway (Delaware)

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway will be the best way to experience the historic, cultural, and scenic qualities of this legacy landscape. Vibrant, pedestrian-friendly villages and urban areas will be an integral part of this landscape. Incentives will be developed to encourage private conservation and preservation actions. The byway planning effort will guide future public investments for enhancements to the route. A balance between through traffic, local traffic, and tourist traffic will be achieved through the use of traffic calming and context-sensitive highway design that is respectful of pedestrians and bicyclists.

The byway will be the best way for leisure travel through the valley – making it easier to visit the museums, gardens, and parks, and to sample its many recreational activities. The potential impacts of additional tourism will be carefully managed through a permanent bi-state group. Stakeholders will work together to identify mutual benefits and to establish incentives to achieve the byway mission. The corridor plan will respect the private property rights of all landowners and business interests.

Vision for the Journey Through Hallowed Ground (Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia)

With the Blue Ridge Mountains (also known as South Mountain in Pennsylvania and Catoclin Mountain in Maryland) as a backdrop, the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Byway- connecting Gettysburg with Monticello - serves as the “spine on the chapters of our American history” with its easy-to-follow links to nearby battlefields, historic sites, Main Street communities, Byways and touring routes, regional trails and waterways, and national parks – links that allow visitors to delve more deeply into the unparalleled history and beauty of this national treasure.

New and exciting multi-media technologies will be used to create memorable and educational experiences, telling the story of how this sacred and beautiful landscape shaped some of our most historic turning points in American history, influencing its leadership and the outcomes of its conflicts. The Byway will emphasize the heritage of

the everyday working landscape and what it was like to live through these most challenging chapters in our American history. The Byway's heritage will be readily identifiable, recognizable, and authentic, whether that heritage is found in towns, parks, or rural working landscapes.

The Byway will be an inspiring and relaxing travel experience – whether by car, bicycle, train, on foot, or by horseback - highlighting the natural beauty and historic character of the corridor. The route will stay much the way it is today, largely rural interspersed by towns with vital and interesting Main Streets and beautiful views of the Blue Ridge and Piedmont landscapes. The roadway itself will continue to change over time while accommodating all modes of transportation and types of users within the corridor. The route will be attractive, safe and well-signed with plenty of pull-offs so people can take their time and not feel rushed by traffic.

Land use along the route will also continue to change, but with new development designed to enhance and beautify the built portions of the corridor. The entire Byway corridor will serve as a model for how American communities can rebuild and rediscover the best of history including working farms; dense historic, walkable and sustainable communities; pristine natural areas; and irreplaceable cultural/historical resources worthy of the next generation's protection and stewardship.

Draft Goals for the Byway

(with related challenges that must be addressed by goal in italics, drawn directly from written comments provided at the first public meeting- text in brackets is interpreted for clarification of cards as transcribed)

Overall Regional Goal and How The Byway Fits Into the Region:

The Lower Mount Bethel Township section should link together the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor to the south with the Delaware Water Gap to the North as a means of establishing a nationally designated byway route along the Delaware River in both Pennsylvania (Delaware River Scenic Drive) and New Jersey (various segments of County and State Roads).

Challenges Identified

- *Local people with limited vision & happy with what they have; the desire to not change the current status; belligerent attitudes to change; keeping things the same; the farmer's- landowners (large) - very narrow minded; how to balance desire to do something positive new relative to staying the course*
- *Fear; safety & security; we don't like outsiders*
- *Possib[ility of] more restrictions, regulations; more control by State and Federal government; will there be additional regulations along the byway; protection from restrictions*
- *Property rights*
- *Mistrust of governments & others; lack of trust in leadership; Supervisors*
- *Communicating true purpose of CMP, getting citizens to understand purpose before voicing opposition; LMBT citizens who don't understand the Byways concept;*
- *Treat farmers fairly*
- *Dealing with the [NAME WITHELD] & like personalities*

Preservation and Conservation Goal (for discussion July 29, 2010):

Build upon the Township's ongoing planning and preservation efforts for open space, agricultural land preservation and watershed management by utilizing the byway to increase partnership opportunities for land conservation and historic preservation in the Township.

Challenges Identified

- *Keep it basically as it is;*
- *Getting farmers and other property owners to do riparian buffers to enhance the watershed preservation*
- *Pro Ag Zoning*
- *Maintain environment*
- *Maintain wildlife*
- *Balancing preservation of rural life with potential visitor increase/ traffic increase*

Enhancement and Management Strategies for the Road Itself (for discussion October 7, 2010)

Work with PennDOT and the Township to develop innovative approaches for balancing the needs of all roadway users while maintaining the character defining features of the Byway. Manage the roadway and roadside character in a manner that accommodates 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.

Challenges Identified

- *Road related noises*
- *Litter and unattractive clutter in yards*
- *The "Free" bridge truck traffic (Riverton Bridge)- [NOTE: there is a weight limit, which is strictly enforced]*
- *Making roadways safe should they become more used*
- *No sidewalks or way to get around without a car; completing the pedestrian trail from Keifer Park to Martins Creek for more recreation opportunities*
- *Traffic thru the village of Martins Creek does need to be calmed- please help!!*
- *People's negative attitudes who think the byway traffic is going to push us over the threshold when in fact it's already over the threshold with thru traffic!*
- *Enforcing speed limits on Little Creek Rd, Belv-MC Highway, 611, elsewhere*
- *Increased traffic; way too much traffic & trucks; traffic; do not increase traffic*
- *Roads are not wide enough; road safety; traffic control*

Community-based Heritage, Agricultural and Eco-Tourism (for discussion November 4, 2010)

Establish the byway as a rural economic development tool to extend visitor stays by coordinating the storytelling, interpretation 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.

Challenges Identified

- *Keeping our water clean and its recreational opportunities open for use by people in the township*
- *Getting farmers & community to support farm market and other tourism economy*
- *Encourage Agri Business*
- *People in our township don't get it- they accept the thousands of cars that zoom thru our town on their way to work & never stop! But think a few slow travelers thru our township who may stop & spend \$ is going to make a difference*
- *Not enough places to stay over*
- *Resolving the question of whether the township would benefit from additional tourism*