



# BRANDYWINE VALLEY NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY DESIGN GUIDELINES

December 2017

## ABSTRACT

A proposal to the Department of Land Use for New Castle County DE and to the Delaware Department of Transportation to establish the Design Guidelines for a Byway Overlay Zone for the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway

## PREPARED BY

The Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Partnership Committee on Design Guidelines





## BRANDYWINE VALLEY NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PARTNERSHIP

The Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Partnership is a citizen based organization that works to implement the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan and respond in a timely manner to major issues facing the Byway. The Byway Partnership functions as an association of allied individuals and organizations committed to the protection and preservation of the intrinsic qualities of the Brandywine Valley and its Scenic Byway.

The permanent members of the Partnership are:

- Brandywine Conservancy and Museum of Art
- Centreville Civic Association
- Delaware Greenways, Inc.
- Delaware Museum of Natural History
- Delaware Nature Society
- Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Hagley Museum and Library
- Kennett Pike Association
- Member of the Business Community (Currently, Inn at Montchanin)
- Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library
- Woodlawn Trustees

## PROJECT TEAM

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## RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY OWNERS

It is the intent of the Design Guidelines to respect the rights of all property owners that the Guidelines affect either directly or indirectly. The Brandywine Valley National Scenic Partnership understands that these Guidelines as applied could, in the opinion of a property owner, affect the value of the property in question. Yet for Byways, and especially National Byways, the attractiveness of an area is enhanced, and, in many cases, property values have risen. The Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway is privileged to have a community of residents and businesses who are extraordinarily public spirited and care very much about the Brandywine Valley, its scenic beauty and its cultural treasures. Over the years, many residents and businesses have voluntarily worked with the community to design their development and renovation projects to preserve the character of the Valley, seeking out input from the community. In all cases, the community has responded and worked out solutions, sometimes very creative solutions, to preserve the character left to us by the DuPont family to preserve.

The Partnership urges those in government, when applying these Guidelines, to apply them in the spirit that the community offers them: to ensure that every property owner is afforded due consideration for their desires but balances that against the need to preserve the national treasure that is the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway.

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## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway (BVNSB), comprised of the Kennett Pike and Route 100 corridors, was named Delaware's only National Scenic Byway in 2005, a distinction of which we all are proud. This distinction requires the state, county and community to take actions to preserve and protect the intrinsic qualities of the Byway, including the implementation of a Corridor Management Plan. This report summarizes design guidelines which, when fully implemented, will preserve and protect this state and national treasure.

The National Scenic Byways program was established by Congress in 1991 to preserve and protect the nation's scenic roadways and is administered by the Federal Highway Administration. A National Scenic Byway is a road recognized by the United States Department of Transportation for one or more of its intrinsic qualities. The Delaware Scenic and Historic Highways program was created in 2000 by Senate Bill 320 which

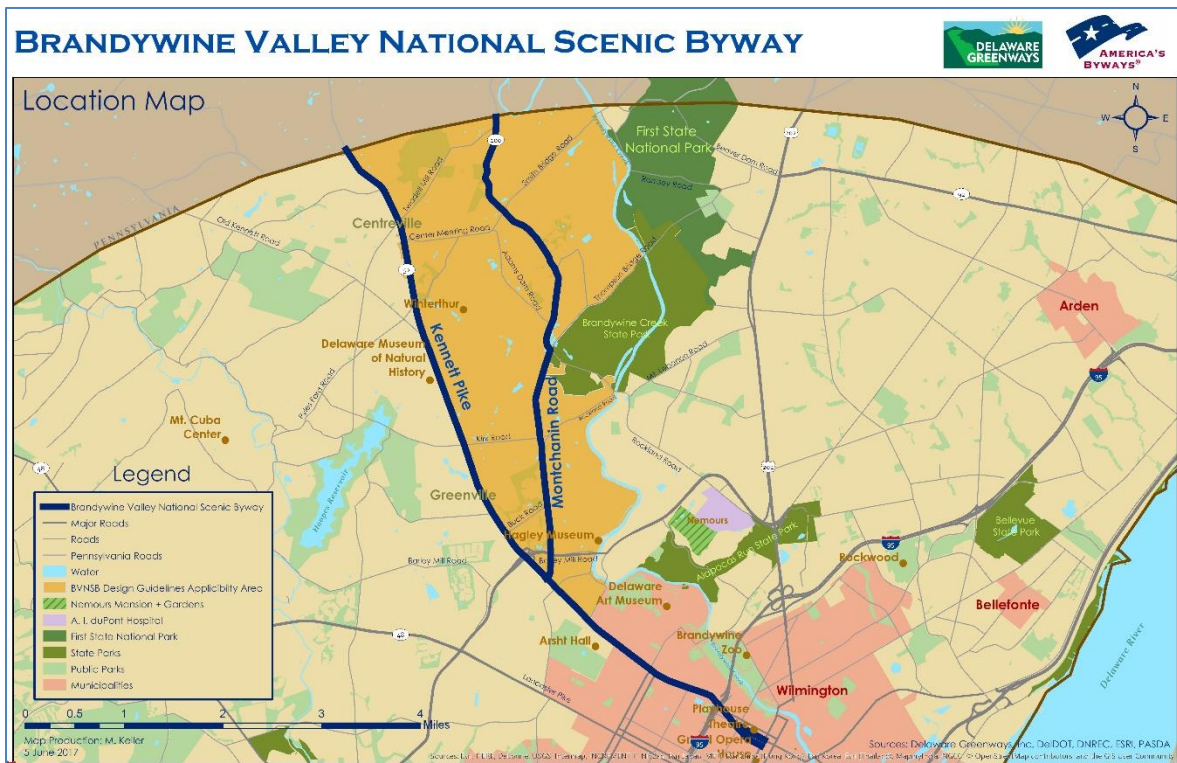


Figure 1: Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Location Map

authorized the Delaware Department of Transportation to create a system of statewide scenic byways. The Brandywine Valley Byway was designated a Delaware Scenic and Historic Byway in 2002 and Delaware's only National Scenic Byway in 2005. In applying for, and gaining National Scenic Byway designation, Delaware is obliged to create and implement a Corridor Management Plan involving the community, and the plan must provide for the conservation and enhancement of the Byway's intrinsic qualities as well as the promotion of tourism and economic development. The Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway (BVNSB) is just one of 126 such roads in the nation including such other treasures as the Blue Ridge Parkway in North Carolina and Virginia, Hells Canyon in Oregon, the Skyline Drive in Virginia, and the Top of the Rockies in Colorado. The BVNSB includes the Kennett Pike and Route 100 corridors from the city of Wilmington to the border with Pennsylvania as shown in Figure 1.



View from the grounds of the Hagley Museum and Library



Hagley Mansion

#### BYWAY FACTS AND FEATURES

The Byway passes through several historic and cultural destinations including the National Historic Districts of Rodney Square, Centreville Village, and Montchanin Village. It traverses through an unparalleled concentration of fabulous gardens, 19<sup>th</sup> century mills and magnificent mansions. The Byway passes by historic and cultural institutions including the Goodstay Center, Gibraltar Mansion, The Delaware Museum of Natural History, Winterthur Museum and Country Estate, Hagley Museum, Brandywine Creek State Park and the First State Monument along the Brandywine. It



Delaware Museum of Natural History



also serves as a gateway to such other attractions as Longwood Gardens, Brandywine River Museum, Brandywine Battlefield Park, and Nemours Mansion and Gardens. The Byway is the scenic corridor along which scores of visitors travel to reach these County, State and National treasures. Last year, more than 200,000 people visited Winterthur Museum and Country Estate, and more than 1 million people visited nearby Longwood Gardens.

The Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway is some 12 miles long and is a true Delaware original where natural beauty, world-class cultural attractions and superb restaurants, hotels and inns draw visitors back season after season.

In 2013, Forbes Magazine named the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway one of the top 10 American road trips in the company of Cape Cod, the Outer Banks of North Carolina, and Route 66 from Chicago to Arizona.

## INTRINSIC QUALITIES

Intrinsic qualities are defined as those features and qualities that are irreplaceable and which make the Byway special and unique. The intrinsic qualities of the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway which led to its designation as Delaware's first national byway are:

1. **Scenic Quality:** the heightened visual experience derived from the view of natural and manmade elements of the visual environment of the scenic byway corridor. The characteristics of the landscape are strikingly distinct and offer a pleasing and most memorable visual experience.
2. **Natural Quality:** features in the visual environment that are in a relatively undisturbed state.
3. **Historic Quality:** legacies of the past that are distinctly associated with physical elements of the landscape that are of such historic significance that they educate the viewer and stir an appreciation for the past.
4. **Cultural Quality:** evidence and expressions of the traditions and customs of the area.
5. **Recreational Quality:** outdoor activities directly associated with, and dependent upon the natural and cultural elements of the corridor's landscape.



**Historic Stone Walls.** The estates of the DuPont Family employed experienced stone masons to construct miles of stone walls around and within their estates.

## BYWAY MANAGEMENT

The BVNSB is fortunate to have a number of organizations responsible for its conservation and enhancement. In addition to civic groups such as the Kennett Pike Association, Delaware Greenways, The Brandywine Conservancy and the Delaware Nature Society, there are two other organizations with responsibilities to preserve and protect the Byway:

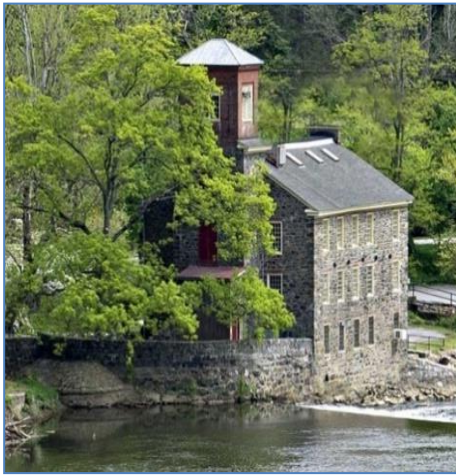
1. the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Advisory Board was created through state legislation in 2012 to assist policymakers and other stakeholders in preserving, maintaining and enhancing the National Scenic Byway, and
2. the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Partnership, a coalition of community, civic and government representatives with day-to-day management responsibility to preserve and protect the Byway.

## GOALS

The Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Partnership has established the following goals for the Design Guidelines to achieve:

1. Preserve and Protect the Intrinsic Qualities of the Byway
2. Conserve roadside features and viewsheds
3. Encourage stewardship and conservation efforts

4. Help guide land use and transportation decisions in ways compatible with the intrinsic qualities
5. Promote tourism and context sensitive development
6. Respect the rights of property owners



Views of the Hagley Museum and Library

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In achieving the goals, the Partnership established the following guiding principles:

1. Preserve, protect and beautify the characteristics of the Byway
2. Minimize impact of developments and changes
3. Preserve open spaces and viewsheds
4. Adopt context-sensitive solutions<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Context Sensitive Solutions are defined by the Federal Highway Administration as a collaborative, interdisciplinary, holistic approach to the development of transportation projects. It is both process and product, characterized by a number of attributes. It involves all stakeholders, including community members, elected officials, interest groups, and affected local, state, and federal agencies. It puts project needs and both agency and community values on a level playing field and considers all tradeoffs in decision making. <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/css/index.cfm>

## COMMITTEE ON DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Partnership has formed the Committee on Design Guidelines to review and consider ways to preserve, maintain and enhance the Byway. Initially the Committee has elected to confront some serious priority concerns which could threaten the Byway if left unaddressed. This report is a product of those efforts.

## CREATE A BRANDYWINE VALLEY NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT

The New Castle County Unified Development Code (UDC) contains many regulations and stipulations for property owners and developers which recognize the cultural, historic and recreational qualities of the Kennett Pike and Route 100 corridors. However, there are not adequate provisions for the protection of the scenic qualities and viewsheds of this important treasure. Therefore, a Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway Overlay District should be created encompassing the entire length of the Byway from Wilmington to the Pennsylvania border. The overlay district should include not just the roadway and its adjacent right-of-way, but also should include the properties which border the Byway. The overlay will provide additional regulatory protections and controls based on sound principles intended to provide scenic viewshed protection.

The development of the proposed guidelines for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Overlay District was the responsibility of the BRNSB Partnership, under the oversight of the BVNSB

Advisory Board. Both groups represent a broad coalition of civic and community groups including representatives from:



Fishing in the Brandywine River

DeIDOT	Westover Hills Neighborhood Association
City of Wilmington	Delaware Nature Society
Kennett Pike Association	Centreville Business Community
Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau	Brandywine Conservancy
Delaware Greenways	Harriett Tubman Underground Railroad Byway
Inn at Montchanin	Woodlawn Trustees
Centreville Civic Association	New Castle County Department of Land Use

Representatives from the State Senate, State House and New Castle County Council regularly attend meetings.

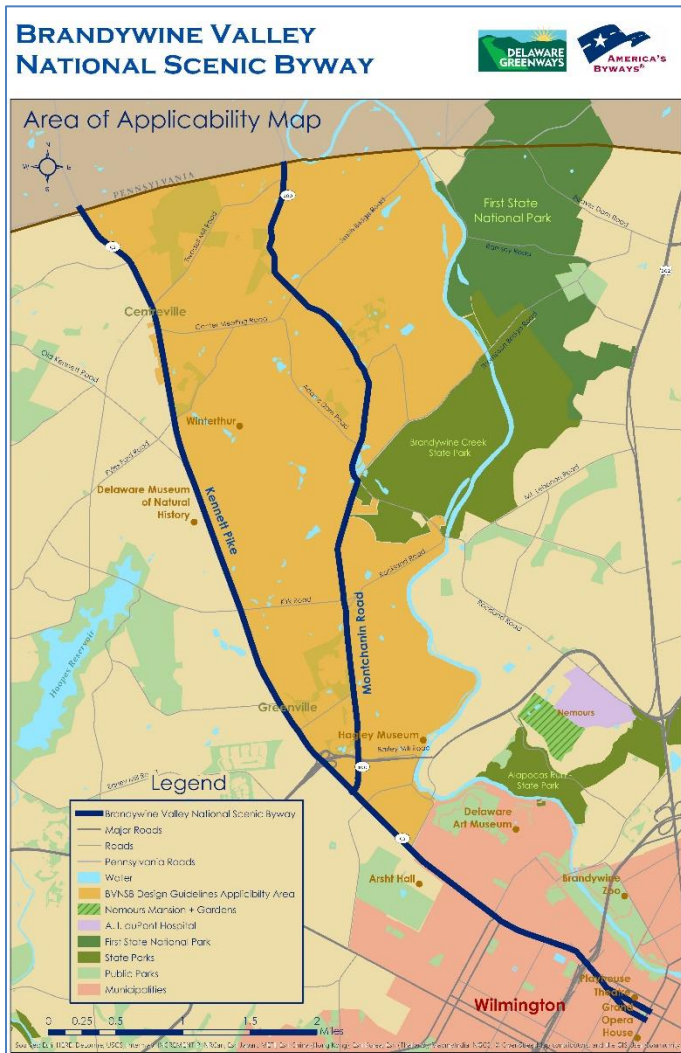


## CONTEXT SENSITIVE GUIDELINES

### AREA OF APPLICABILITY

To be effective, the Design Guidelines must cover not only the land immediately adjacent

to the byway itself but the roadways connecting to and surrounding the byway roadways. Additionally, the area of applicability must be reflective of the Design Guidelines being promulgated by the Red Clay Scenic Byway whose area abuts the Kennett Pike, the western leg of the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway.



**Figure 2: Area of Applicability**

the highway right of way for the Kennett Pike or the rear property line parallel to the Kennett Pike for the properties abutting the Pike whichever is furthest from the Kennett Pike. The northern boundary is, of course, the Pennsylvania line.

Figure 2 illustrates the area of applicability of the design Guidelines as recommended by the Byway Partnership. The area of applicability has the following boundary definition. On the east side, the Brandywine River forms the boundary, excluding the Brandywine Creek State Park lands on the west side of the Brandywine River. On the south side, the boundary is the City of Wilmington line. On the west side, which borders the Red Clay Scenic Byway, the boundary is 150 feet west of

## DESIGN GUIDELINE TOPIC AREAS

To preserve and protect the scenic qualities of the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway, there are several context sensitive guidelines which should be incorporated into the regulatory standards for the BVNSB Overlay District. Following are the topic areas covered by the Design Guidelines:

- Building Heights
- Building Streetyard Setbacks
- Signage
  - Signage Dimensions
  - Signage Illumination
  - Number and Colors of Signs
- Context Sensitive Pedestrian Pathways
- Protect and Preserve the Scenic Viewsheds
- Utilities

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### BUILDING HEIGHTS

The Unified Development Code (UDC) for New Castle County regulates building heights based on Zoning designation. The maximum heights can range from 35-feet to 180-feet depending on the zoning. Certain parcels along the Byway allow buildings as high as 180-feet which, if constructed, would destroy the intrinsic scenic and historic qualities of the Byway. Many developers would be interested in capitalizing on the beautiful vista views, the historic qualities and the cultural heritage seen along the Byway at the expense of the community and the many visitors to the area. A few years ago, one developer proposed a high rise residential and commercial tower in Greenville. Such a building would be an assault on the entire area and a permanent blight on the Byway.



The NCC Unified Development Code establishes maximum building heights depending on Zoning designations and on development type. In reviewing the Zoning maps for the Kennett Pike and Route 100 corridors, a variety of Zoning designations are in place. The concentrated commercial districts of Greenville and Montchanin villages with Zoning designations of Commercial Regional and Office Regional comprises about 9% of the



Byway outside of the Wilmington City limits. The rest of the Byway – some 91% of it – includes Zoning designations of Office Neighborhood, Commercial Neighborhood, Suburban, Suburban Estate, and Neighborhood Conservation.

In the concentrated commercial districts of Greenville and Montchanin villages with Zoning designations of Commercial Regional and Office Regional, building heights may be up to 180 feet tall for mixed use developments, and up to 140 feet tall for other development types. These are the parcels of major concern.

All other Zoning designations along the Byway allow building heights up to 35 or 40 feet except for churches, schools, fire stations which can be up to 45 feet and apartments which can be up to 60 feet.

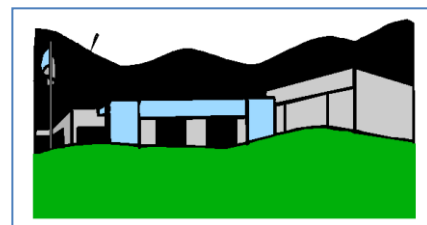
Many historic towns across the country set building height limits to preserve the heritage, culture and architectural integrity of the district. Haddonfield NJ and Princeton NJ set building height limits of 35 feet, while Moorestown NJ sets the limit at 45 feet.

The tallest building situated directly on the Byway outside of the Wilmington City limits is the Greenville Crossing 1 main building which is some 40-feet tall, and this sits well back off the Kennett Pike roadway. It is proposed that the maximum height of any building situated directly on the Byway outside the Wilmington City limits is 40-feet. An exception should be made for churches, schools, fire stations, apartments and hotels which may be up to 45-feet. Building height variances on the Byway should only be considered in cases of significant hardship and only for the general welfare of the entire community.

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#### BUILDING STREETYARD SETBACKS

Development codes specify building setbacks from the street, from neighboring properties on each side, and to the back. From the community's perspective, the street yard setback is a critical element in creating an orderly, pleasing and vista view of the surrounding open spaces. A 2 ½ story building set back 150-feet from the roadway is significantly less intrusive than the same building set back 25-feet from the roadway. Appropriate street yard setbacks differ for different zones and environments. National Scenic Byways are treasured for their vista views, and uninterrupted scenic views are an essential feature of them. Some street yard



setbacks stipulated in the NCC UDC are not appropriate for the BVNSB and if not addressed may result in a permanent downgrading of the vista views along the Byway.

The NCC Unified Development Code establishes minimum building street yard setbacks depending on Zoning designations and on development type. Street Yard setbacks range from 15-feet to 100-feet. Most suburban and neighborhood Zonings specify a minimum Street Yard Setback of 40 feet, with smaller lots and townhouses at 25 feet. Such setbacks are typical for most areas. However, the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway is recognized for its vista views of a beautiful countryside, open spaces and rolling hills. Many stretches along the Byway are zoned Suburban (S) or Suburban Estate (SE) and with few exceptions the existing street yard setbacks are more than 150-feet. There is an opportunity to act now to increase the street yard setbacks along the Byway where there are S and SE zonings and preserve the wonderful views for future generations of residents and visitors.

To preserve the views for everyone traveling along the Byway – the very views which were the essential elements in getting the National recognition – the minimum street yard setbacks should be set to preserve, to the extent possible, the intrinsic scenic views along the Byway.

For all S and SE Zonings along the Byway, the minimum street yard setback should be 150 feet, and the first 100 feet should be preserved as open space with no structures or parking lots permitted. For all other Zonings other than S and SE, the street yard setback should be a minimum of 40-feet. It is the intent of this proposal to respect the property rights of owners. If setting the street yard setback infringes significantly on the rights of property owners to develop their properties, accommodations should be made to offset, to the extent possible, the impact of the infringement. For example, if the proposed new setbacks result in the property owner giving up, say, one or more subunits or subdivisions, then shorter side yard or rear yard setbacks should be explored, along with allowing smaller lot sizes. To the extent possible, the “use” value of the property should be protected by relaxing other standards. Other protective measures should include that existing structures within the 150-foot proposed setback may be replaced on their existing footprint or smaller, and, where appropriate, septic fields and tanks may be placed within the 150-foot setback. Any existing structures with smaller setbacks should be grandfathered but no future buildings or extensions on those sites may be closer than the

existing setback. In addition, variances should be considered only in cases of significant hardship. Signage

Signage considerations consist of three elements: Signage Dimensions, Sign Illumination and the Number and Color of Signs. Currently, signs are regulated by the UDC. Covering all New Castle County, the UDC must be general enough to provide guidance along major highways with large suburban style shopping centers as well as small shopping villages such as Greenville. Of concern is the general nature of the regulations permits signage outside the context of the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway. Working with commercial and institutional property owners and developers, the Kennett Pike Association has negotiated on behalf of the community with some success to bring signing as close as possible to the context of the byway. The following pictures show some of the successes of that effort.



**Two Greenville Crossing is an example of a sign that is not illuminated and in context with the landscaping adjacent to it.**



**Powder Mill Square is a successful example of a shopping center owner that worked with the community to develop a signing plan that fits with the context of the Byway.**

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## SIGNAGE DIMENSIONS

Signs are an important part of our everyday lives informing us, directing us and advertising our commercial enterprises. However, in addition to building structures, signs intrude on, and disrupt views of open spaces and scenes if not restricted in a reasonable way. The size of signs is one of the most important aspects in creating the ambiance and character of a community or location. Present regulations are not entirely appropriate, and there is

a threat that large, out-of-place signs will significantly diminish the character and views of the Byway. In addition, the New Castle County Land Use Department has at times interpreted the present regulations in a way neither written nor intended by the authors of the UDC, thus posing additional threats to the Byway.



**The Inn at Montchanin which is directly on the Byway has utilized this sign for many years. The Partnership believes it fits within the context of the Byway, but its dimensions are lightly larger than recommended in these design guidelines.**

New Castle County restricts the size, placement, number and illumination of signs in its Unified Development Code (UDC). The regulations and stipulations are extensive and generally comprehensive. In Suburban, Suburban Estate and Neighborhood Conservation Zonings, Nameplate signs are limited to 1.5 sq. ft., and ID and Bulletin Board signs are limited to 20 sq. ft. These are adequate for the Byway. For Office Neighborhood and Office Regional Zonings, Nameplate signs are limited to 2 sq. ft. and Bulletin Board signs to 20 sq. ft. – both adequate for the Byway. However, ID signs can be up to 75 sq. ft. –

too large, obtrusive and out of place for the Byway. In Commercial Neighborhood Zonings, Wall signs are allowed up to 200 sq. ft., far too large for the Byway. In Commercial Regional Zonings Wall Signs can be up to 300 sq. ft. – again far too large and out of place for the Byway. In Commercial Regional Zonings, roof signs are allowed up to 300 sq. ft. Roof signs are out of place and out of character along the historic and cultural Byway. The Centreville Village Design Guidelines limit wall signs to 8 sq. ft., freestanding signs to 20 sq. ft., and aggregate signage to 20 sq. ft. Window signs and awning signs there are limited to 20% of the window or awning area. The City of New Castle limits signs to 12 sq. ft. in the Historic Commerce District, and to 10 sq. ft. per lineal foot of street frontage or 100 sq. ft. max.

To preserve and protect the character and views along the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway, maximum sign limits should be reduced in certain specific Zonings. Along the BVNSB:

- For ON and OR Zonings on the Byway Identification signs should be limited to a maximum area of 50 sq. ft.

- For CN Zonings on the Byway single-use buildings and individual business shopping center wall signs should be limited to a maximum area of 100 sq. ft. In addition, such signs should not be closer than 3 feet from the top and bottom of the wall to which they are attached.
- For CR Zonings on the Byway shopping center wall signs should be limited to a maximum area of 100 sq. ft. In addition, wall signs should not be closer than 3 feet from the top and bottom of the wall to which they are attached.
- All roof signs, flags and banners should be prohibited along the Byway.
- Signs displayed in a window shall not exceed 20% of the window area.

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## SIGNAGE ILLUMINATION

The character qualities of the Byway corridors can be described as historic and cultural. The Byway is the home of many visitor sites including Winterthur, the Delaware Museum of Natural History, Brandywine Creek State Park, and the Gibraltar Estate. It also serves as a gateway to many other important sites such as Longwood Gardens, Hagley Museum, the Nemours Estate, Brandywine River Museum, Brandywine Battlefield Park, and the First State National Monument. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, the Byway's other defining aspect is its scenic qualities. The Byway's vista views, rolling hills, undisturbed landscapes and natural beauty are enjoyed by residents, hikers, bicyclists and many hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Other than out-of-character towering buildings, no other element is more disruptive to these intrinsic qualities than signs, especially bright highly-illuminated signs. The signage regulations regarding sign illumination are inadequate to preserve and protect the qualities of the Byway which were responsible for its National designation in the first place.



Recognizing the importance of preserving and protecting Delaware's Byways, the state enacted regulations limiting the lighting of signs on those roadways. Title 17 of the Delaware Code, Chapter 11 addresses the Regulation of Outdoor Advertising on Byways, both state and national. This chapter specifically prohibits variable message signs on designated byways. In addition, signs of such intensity as to cause glare are prohibited, as are signs which include flashing or moving lights.

Clearly the State of Delaware understands the deleterious impact of brightly lit signs on scenic byways. The NCC UDC also places restrictions on sign illumination. Prohibited in the UDC are signs which flash, sparkle or glitter, and signs which move or are animated, flags, banners, and sandwich-type sidewalk signs. In Centreville, the Village Design Guidelines stipulate that signs shall be illuminated with soft, indirect light, and back lighting shall not be used. Neon signs are prohibited, as are changeable electronic signs. For many years organizations such as the Kennett Pike Association have asked commercial institutional establishments to not use internal lighting for their signs, and to opt instead for externally lit signs if lighting is needed at all. There are exceptions such as gasoline stations where an internally lit sign shows the way to the station from a distance away. Most other establishments, but not all, have agreed to honor the wishes of the community, but this is managed on a case-by-case basis and more recently some local businesses have erected internally lit signs. In many historic districts across America, signs are limited to no lighting or external lighting and all signs are equally visible, rather than a competition for whose sign is the biggest and brightest.

On the Byway, outside of the City of Wilmington limits, all electronic variable message signs and all signs illuminated with neon and other colored or brightly lit intense sources are prohibited, and signs shall be lit with shielded soft, indirect white light and not back lit. Neon and other intensely lit signs should be prohibited everywhere, including in window displays. Search lights and beacon lights should be prohibited.

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## NUMBER AND COLOR OF SIGNS

With ever-increasing regulations at the federal, state, county and local levels, and with intensifying competition for customer attention, there has been a proliferation of signs along our roadways and the Byway is no exception. A small sampling of the more common signs which overload our field of view include: Wayfinding, Speed Limit, Distance, Stop, Street Name, Real Estate, Yield, Bicycle, Directional, Turning, Shopping Center, Store, and Institution signs placed on buildings walls, roofs, yards, monuments, sidewalks, and curbs. In some places, there are so many competing signs a passerby cannot possibly see them all, let alone read them. The NCC UDC limits the number of signs on many but not all premises. In some cases, the limits set are not adequate to preserve and protect the intrinsic qualities of the Byway. The UDC also does not include adequate specifications for

the colors used in signs, resulting in some cases with a jarring array of clashing and disrupting colors.

The Centreville Village Design Guidelines limit wall signs to 1 per wall façade per building, with consideration for an added sign if the building is on a corner. The NCC UDC places clear limits on the number of signs allowed on properties Zoned S, SE, NC, ON and OR --- generally 1 sign type (ID, Nameplate, Bulletin) per dwelling or building. For the most part, these are adequate limitations. For properties Zoned CN and CR, ground signs are adequately limited, but wall signs are not. Single use or shopping center sites have no limit on the number of wall signs permitted as long as they conform to the specified area limits. This has led to some cases where a store in a shopping center has 3 or even 4 separate signs on a single wall. This is excessive and disrupts the attractiveness, architectural continuity and appearance of the entire site.

In addition to concerns about wall signs in CN and CR Zoning districts, there is a broader concern about the number of signs all along the Byway. Federal and State regulations require certain signs to be posted, and posted in a certain way for purposes of public safety. There is also a compelling case to be made for erecting Wayfinding signs along the byway to direct visitors to their intended destinations. In all other cases, the number of signs should be minimized along the byway protecting the open vista and scenic views many have traveled specifically to enjoy.

On the Byway, there should be a limit of 1 wall sign for each business on a wall up to 50 lineal feet. For walls, greater than 50 lineal feet, 2 signs may be permitted subject to other area limitations. In addition, it is proposed to seek agreement with the State of Delaware to minimize the number of signs wherever possible along the Byway.

The New Castle County UDC does not attempt to control or limit the colors used on signs. In most cases wall sign owners use colors which are complementary to the building and trim colors to which they are attached. The Centreville Village Design Guidelines include a section on Sign Color: "Colors used for the sign shall generally match or complement either the background or the trim color of the structure which it serves. No more than two or three colors should be used. If more than one sign is used, the colors on all signs shall be coordinated with each other to present a unified image."

The Byway Overlay District ordinance should specify:

- The colors used for signs shall generally match or complement the background and trim colors of the structure it serves.
- No more than 2 or 3 colors should be used.

#### CONTEXT SENSITIVE PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS

The Delaware Department of Transportation maintains a series of policies mandating sidewalks in areas of the state that are within towns, villages and cities. The policies also require sidewalks to be constructed along roadways in suburban areas and in areas that are suburbanizing. This is pursuant to a Complete Streets Policy that requires all non-limited access roadways to safely serve motorized vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. To implement the policy, the Department has created maps that detail where sidewalks are required to be installed by developers as part of their roadway frontage improvements. Outside the City of Wilmington, the policies require the installation of sidewalks from the Wilmington City Line to Winterthur and the Country House and through the village of Centreville on Route 52. On Route 100, sidewalks are required between Route 141 and Montchanin.

The Corridor Management Plan for the Byway provides general guidance regarding sidewalks, calling for their installation where appropriate. The Partnership believes that sidewalks have already been installed where appropriate along Route 52 in the commercial center of Greenville and in the village of Centreville. As development proposals are submitted, the Partnership is concerned that DeIDOT will continue to adhere to the policy and require the installation of sidewalks, severely changing the character of the Byway.

When development proposals are submitted to the Department of Land Use, current practice is to defer to DeIDOT regarding the property frontage regarding sidewalks. Coordination with DeIDOT at the Deputy Secretary level indicate that DeIDOT will defer to the County's Department of Land Use if requested by the County if the County puts in place a policy that adheres to the Complete Streets Policy managed by DeIDOT. The purpose of this proposal is to put forth a policy for adoption by the Department of Land Use that adheres to the Complete Streets Policy.





Context Sensitive Pathways, unlike over-engineered sidewalks, respect the mature trees and bushes and utilize them as an aesthetic and safety buffer. Such pathways enable residents to safely enjoy the scenic and historic corridors and viewsheds without being intimidated by vehicular traffic, encourage healthy lifestyles, and provide an option other than vehicles to walk to where we live, shop, work, pray, play and school our children, while respecting the rural character of the roadways. Ideally, the pathways should be further away from the roadway than the minimal 10-foot DelDOT right of way, be no wider than 5 feet, be constructed of asphalt, undulate with the natural topography and not be in a straight line. All context sensitive pathways shall be ADA compliant.

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## POLICY ELEMENTS

1. The area under consideration is Route 52 from Stonegates and Brook Valley Road to the PA line with the exception of the Village of Centreville from Center Meeting Road to Snuff Mill Road, which already has sidewalks, plus Route 100 from Route 141 to the Pennsylvania line. No sidewalks should be installed along these areas.
2. Where possible, and without significantly disrupting the inherent qualities of the Byway and its viewsheds, and without destroying mature landscaping, context sensitive pathways are preferred over standard concrete sidewalks in the areas noted in Policy Element No. 1.
3. Pathways should generally be asphalt, no more than 5-feet wide, meandering and undulating with the natural topography of the land and be ADA compliant.
4. Pathways should be landscaped and preferably located beyond the right-of-way, set back more than 10-feet from the paved roadway or shoulder. If it is impractical to locate the pathway beyond the right-of-way, a pathway in the right-of-way should be considered, or no pathway where an adequate shoulder exists and can serve as a pedestrian walkway.
5. Where a publicly accessible pathway exists within a development, there is no need to construct a second pathway parallel to the roadway. It is important, however, that the pathways internal to the development are connected to pathways on the adjacent properties.
6. The rights of property owners should be respected through active involvement in the planning and design process.

7. Pathways, when required, should be installed only along one side of the Byway. In the case of Route 52, the west side is preferred where possible, but some crossover to the east side may be needed.
8. When the pathway network crosses over the roadway, a pedestrian signal should be installed.
9. Between Stonegates and Kirk/Campbell Road, pathways should also be installed on the east side where possible, and beyond the right-of-way and beyond the right of way where internal pathways are not publicly accessible. West side pathways between Brook Valley Road and Kirk Road should only be considered if and when the properties on that side are significantly developed.
10. Public hearings should be held to determine the communities' preference for where the pathways are located. It is likely that there will be viable alternative pathways along the full length of the network between Greenville and Centreville. Such pathways could be within the right-of-way, beyond the right-of way, or internal to developments.
11. There should be no formal government sponsored pathway or sidewalk project for the Byway. Rather, along these defined areas, context sensitive pathways should be constructed as part of significant development projects.

The Department of Land Use should adopt a design guideline for the proposed Byway Overlay Ordinance related to context sensitive pedestrian pathways that adopt the guiding principle and the policy elements of this proposal. Figure 3 illustrates the initial recommendations of the Partnership for context sensitive pathways.



Sidewalks in the commercial center of Greenville

Where sidewalks are called for, brick sidewalks, like the sidewalks constructed by DelDOT in Greenville are recommended.

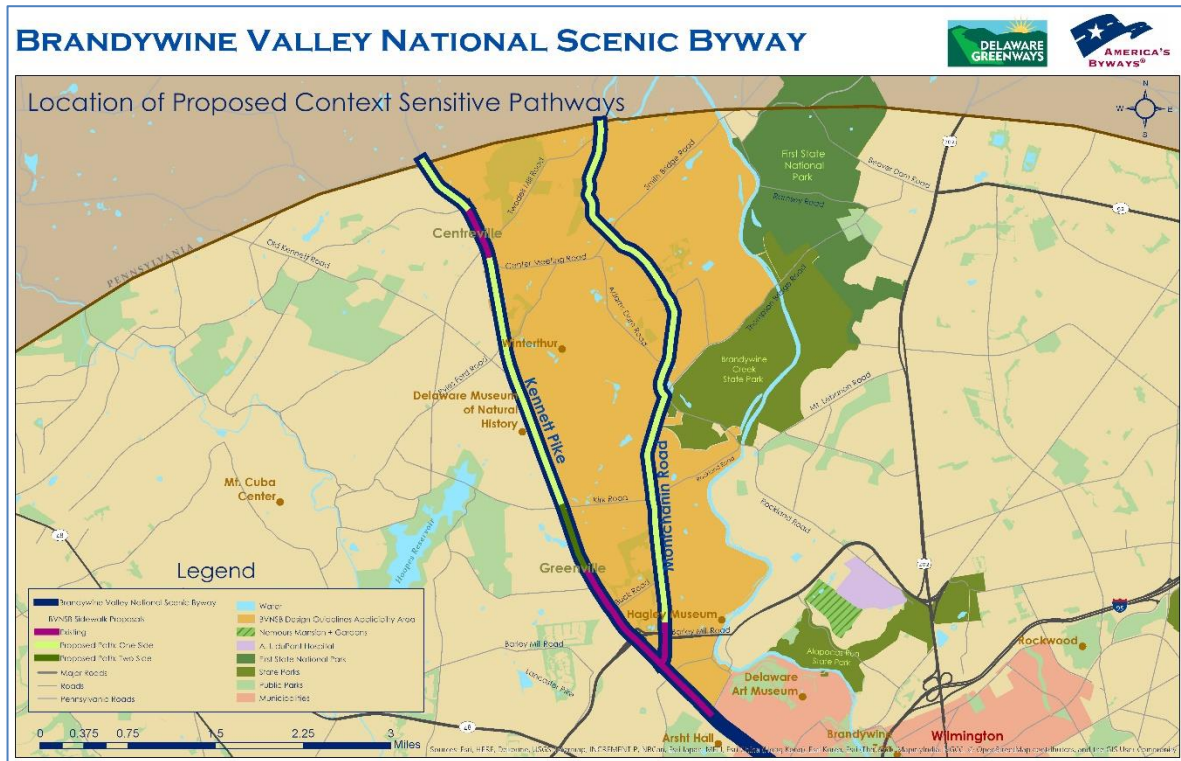
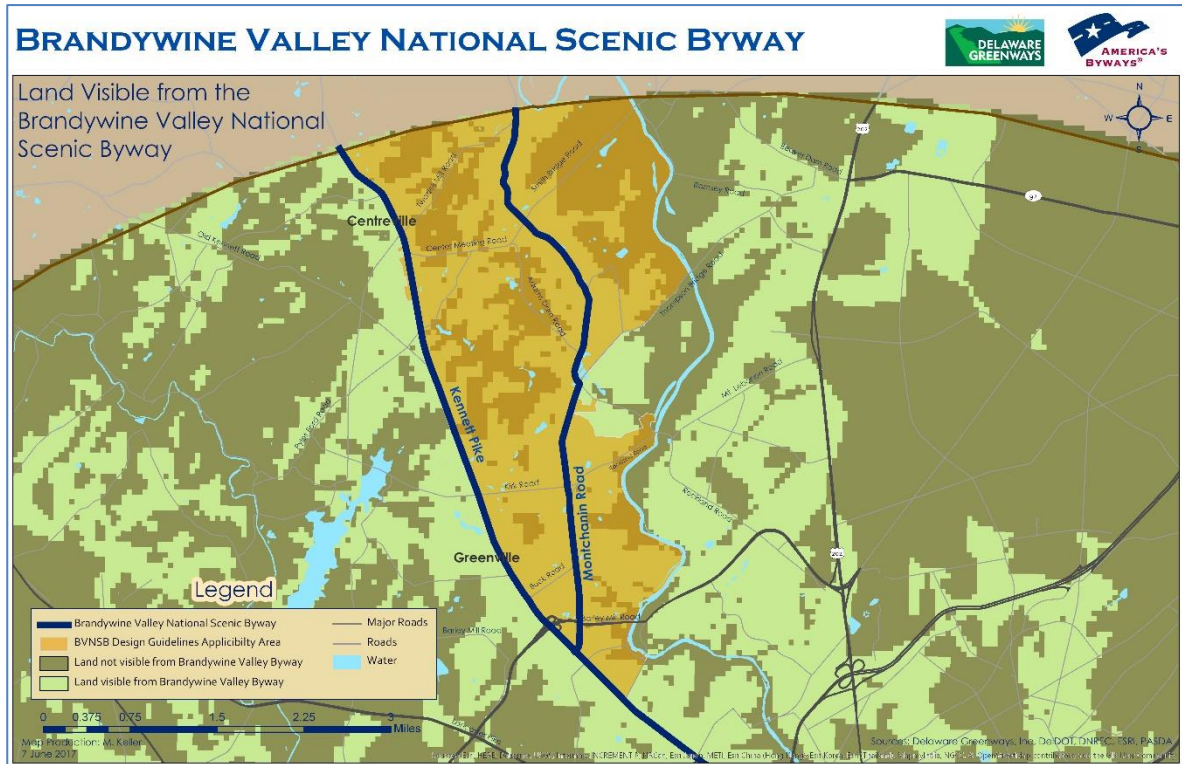


Figure 3: Location of Context Sensitive Pathways

**PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE SCENIC VIEWSHEDS**

The iconic viewsheds of the Brandywine Valley, in many places unchanged for centuries, are one of the major reasons for the designation of the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway. While there are numerous viewsheds in the rural portion of the Byway, there are few in the commercial center of Greenville. However, the study area includes some of the most iconic views such as Winterthur and many of the mansions of Chateau Country. Not all the views are immediate to the roadways; some are off in the distance. However, they are no less iconic. The landscape along Montchanin Road, unchanged since the early 1900's features the gently sloping hillsides of Winterthur. The estates along Center Meeting Road and Pyles Ford Road have preserved views remote from the roadway. Each view, illustrated in light green on Figure 4 should be preserved for all time.



**Figure 4: Lands Visible from the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway and other roadways of the Brandywine Valley (Map based upon GIS modeling. Lands noted as visible from the Byway are identified using contour elevations and ground cover layers).**

focus of preservation efforts. The guiding principle of preserving the viewsheds is to refrain from adding buildings or plantings that obstruct the existing view.

Following are proposed guidelines and tools to protect the natural beauty and scenic viewsheds:

1. Minimize intrusions: stockade fences and dense landscaping can significantly intrude on viewsheds and vista views of the Byway
2. Pursue scenic easements that protect viewshed features
3. Cluster new buildings with deep setbacks where possible. Observe the 150-foot setback from the DeIDOT right of way line.
4. Employ natural materials and designs consistent with the rural character of the Byway
5. Maintain existing character-defining features of the Byway such as the stone walls, mature trees and land contours.

6. Remove inappropriate elements in the landscape that detract from the scenic quality
7. Locate all new utilities underground

For viewsheds beyond the 150-foot buffer, analyze the contours of the land, the positioning of the buildings against the line of sight from the roadways. Insure that the placement of the buildings does not obstruct the line of sight.



**Iconic views of the Brandywine Valley. Developers and property owners should take care to preserve these iconic views.**



**Granogue. This mansion is visible from Montchanin Road and Center Meeting Road. Relocate or redesign buildings proposed to be located at points that interrupt the view of this iconic mansion to preserve the viewshed from the roadways.**

## UTILITIES

The distinguishing characteristics and qualities of the BVNSB stem from its historical and cultural heritages. Along most of the length of the Byway are properties preserved in the condition when they were first developed. The predominant architectural style of the buildings and structures along the Byway is 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Modern lighting fixtures and traffic signals installed along the Byway contradict this style and character and disrupt the scenic, historic and cultural qualities of the Byway.

Street lighting fixtures and traffic light fixtures are generally installed in state rights of way and are not regulated by style in Delaware. It is proposed that the state of Delaware incorporate into state code for the Byway that street lighting fixtures and traffic signal

devices and standards should be unobtrusive, and context sensitive in design. Fixtures and poles, when necessary, should have minimal impact to the scenic and historic landscape of the Byway.

Aesthetic considerations should include the retention or improvement of roadside character.

Consistency of design

is another principal factor. Each fixture or pole should be considered on a case-by-case basis, and stakeholder input sought, to ensure the best design and protection of the roadside character.

Power and telecommunications lines strung between rough-hewn utility poles as far as the eye can see have become over the last 100 years the most intrusive and disruptive force in our interrupted views of treasured countryside. These lines and poles exist along the BVNSB and it is hard to imagine how much more beautiful the vista views would be



**Ornamental Traffic Signal Poles in Greenville.**

without them. Unfortunately, it would take a very significant amount of money to move these lines underground at once. However, we can start now the lengthy process of moving these unsightly obstructions underground when the opportunity presents itself, and we can certainly put new lines underground where it is feasible to do so. Several decades ago, the Kennett Pike Association was successful in convincing the state to put the utility lines underground in a section of Greenville roadway that was being modified. Utility lines have competed with trees that align the Byway and in many cases large sections of these beautiful old trees have been hacked away to make room for the overhead lines.

At present, there are no state regulations requiring utility lines to be placed underground, even though long term maintenance and reliability are enhanced with underground lines. It is proposed the state of Delaware incorporate into their codes for the Byway that utility lines should be placed underground when lines are installed for new developments and construction. New lines should go under the Byway and underground alongside the Byway and not above the roadways strung on utility poles. When existing lines are replaced, they should be placed underground whenever possible.





## REFERENCE PUBLICATIONS

The Partnership recommends that the Byway Overlay Zone for the Brandywine Valley National Scenic byway and its attendant Design Guidelines reference the following publications and websites.

### CORRIDOR PLANNING PUBLICATIONS OF THE BRANDYWINE VALLEY NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY<sup>2</sup>

1. *Corridor Management Plan: Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway*  
[http://www.deldot.gov/information/community\\_programs\\_and\\_services/byways/brandywine\\_cmp.shtml](http://www.deldot.gov/information/community_programs_and_services/byways/brandywine_cmp.shtml). The Corridor Management Plan defines the unique intrinsic values of the Byway Valley National Scenic Byway Corridor and the strategies and projects designed to protect, preserve and enhance it for all residents, businesses and visitors.
2. *Scenic Stewardship: A Plan to Preserve and Enhance the Landscape of the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway*. This document, available from Delaware Greenways describes the existing landscapes and how that each can be brought back into historical significance. The Partnership considers the landscapes and the viewsheds that they framed as the primary intrinsic value that must be preserved.
3. *Report on the Historic and Living Resources along the Kennett Pike and Montchanin Road for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byways*. The report was prepared by the Historic Society of Delaware and documents the historic resources that are the underpinning of the Byway. Many of the resources documented in the publication remain to this day and are to be preserved to the extent possible. Copies of the publication are available at Delaware Greenways and at the Historical Society of Delaware.
4. *Context Sensitive Solutions for Delaware Byways*:  
[http://deldot.gov/information/community\\_programs\\_and\\_services/byways/pdf/Context\\_Sensitive\\_Solutions\\_for\\_Delaware\\_Byways.pdf](http://deldot.gov/information/community_programs_and_services/byways/pdf/Context_Sensitive_Solutions_for_Delaware_Byways.pdf). This manual is developed to provide guidance to DelDOT designers and consultants, including developers

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<sup>2</sup> Just after publication of the Corridor Management Plan and the other publications listed, the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway achieved designation as a National Byway, one of only 150 across the United States.

and their consultants during the planning, design, construction, and operation and maintenance of projects on Delaware Byways.

## INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES

Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Pennsylvania: <http://brandywinevalleybyway.org/>

Centreville Civic Association: <https://www.centrevillede.info/civic-association>

Delaware Greenways: <http://delawaregreenways.org/>

Delaware Museum of Natural History: <http://www.delmnh.org/>

DelDOT:

[http://www.deldot.gov/information/community\\_programs\\_and\\_services/byways/brandywine.shtml](http://www.deldot.gov/information/community_programs_and_services/byways/brandywine.shtml)

Federal Highway Administration: Americas Byways: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/byways/>

Federal Highway Administration: National Scenic Byways Program:

[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic\\_byways/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/)

Kennett Pike Association: <http://www.kennettpike.com/>

Winterthur Museum Garden and Library: <http://www.winterthur.org/>