



Strategic Landscapes
Preservation Plan:
Rearguard Defense &
Strategic Retreat

Executive Summary
August 2016

American Battlefield Protection Program Battlefield Planning Grants

The Delaware County Planning Department secured a grant in 2013 from the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) to further investigate the importance of two local actions in the larger Battle of Brandywine on September 11, 1777; namely the Strategic Retreat near the Concord Meetinghouse and along Thornton Road in Concord and Thornbury townships and the Rearguard Defense near Dilworthtown in Chadds Ford.

Other battlefields that have received Battlefield Planning Grants from ABPP include sites from:

The Revolutionary War

- ◆ Battle of Germantown
- ◆ Princeton Battlefield

The War of 1812

- ◆ Battle of Lake Erie
- ◆ Battle of Baltimore

The Mexican-American War

- ◆ The Siege of Fort Brown
- ◆ The Battle of San Pasqual

The Civil War

- ◆ Fredericksburg
- ◆ Spotsylvania
- ◆ Manassas

American Indian Wars

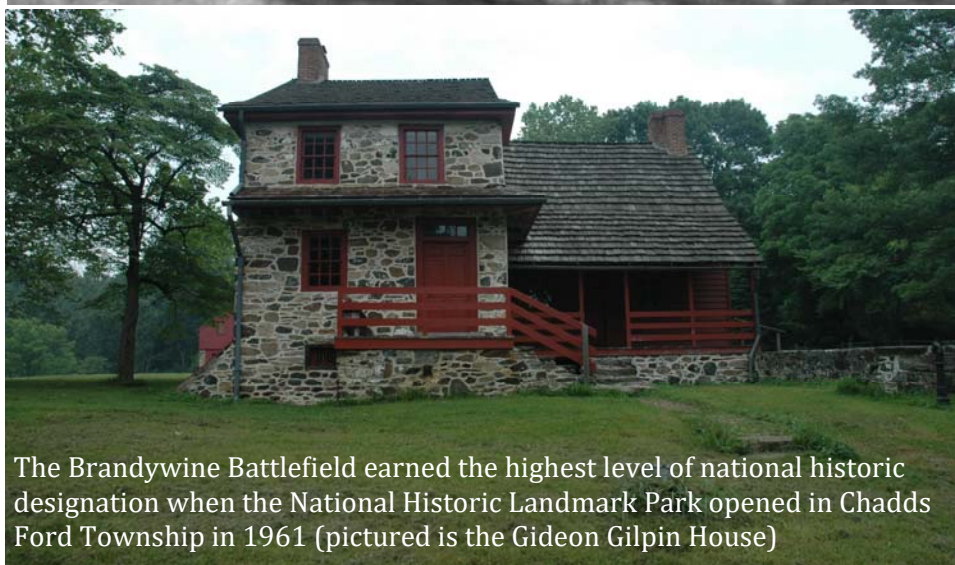
- ◆ Black Hills War
- ◆ United States-Dakota War
- ◆ Nez Perce War
- ◆ Cheyenne-Sioux Indian Wars

World War II

- ◆ Pearl Harbor

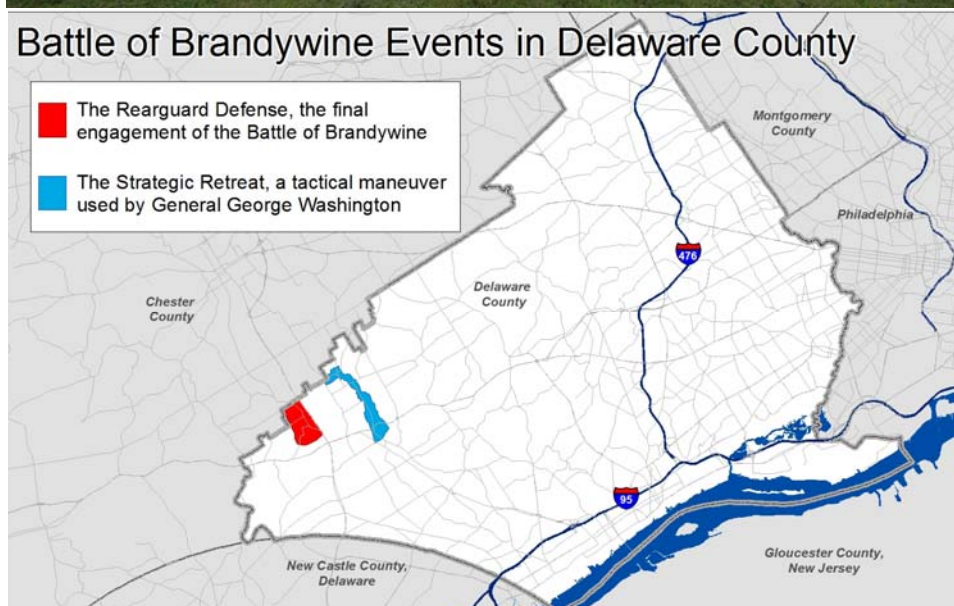


Battle of Brandywine reenactment at the Brandywine Battlefield National Historic Landmark Park



The Brandywine Battlefield earned the highest level of national historic designation when the National Historic Landmark Park opened in Chadds Ford Township in 1961 (pictured is the Gideon Gilpin House)

Battle of Brandywine Events in Delaware County



BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Battle of Brandywine was one of the American Revolution's largest, with nearly 30,000 American and British troops involved in the battle across 35,000 acres within Chester County and Delaware County. One of the earliest battles of the Revolutionary War, the Battle of Brandywine saw General George Washington's citizen soldiers engaging General William Howe and his professional army from sunup to sundown on September 11, 1777. Though the Americans lost this battle, their overall resiliency demonstrated a strength that inspired the confidence of the French and increased their support of the American cause.

Delaware County's *Strategic Landscapes Preservation Plan: Rearguard Defense & Strategic Retreat* investigates two of the thirteen "strategic landscapes" identified in Chester County Planning Commission's 2013 *Brandywine Battlefield Preservation Plan: Revolution in the Peaceful Valley*. Designed to engage communities in conversations about the importance of western Delaware County's role during the battle, the plan provides guidance on preserving, promoting, and educating the public about these significant events.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND RESEARCH

Extensive public participation was the foundation of this plan. This included assembling a steering committee; convening public meetings; communicating with municipal representatives and landowners; and general outreach. Three working groups collaborated with the Department throughout the project.

Stakeholders involved with the plan included:

- ◆ Chadds Ford Historical Society
- ◆ Concord Township Historical Society
- ◆ Thornbury Historical Society
- ◆ Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates
- ◆ The Brandywine Conservancy
- ◆ Newlin Grist Mill
- ◆ William Brinton 1704 House
- ◆ Chadds Ford Business Association
- ◆ Concord Country Club
- ◆ Concordville Inn
- ◆ Destination Delco
- ◆ Businesses clustered along historic Route 202

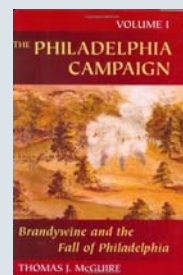
Archeology

In addition to reaching out to the public, the Delaware County Planning Department hired the Cultural Resource Management firm JMA, a CCRG Company, to conduct an Archeological Design Analysis for the Preservation Plan. The analysis was entirely research-based and non-invasive. The Plan's archeological section includes a geomorphic analysis of the battlefield and an assessment of potential archeological remains. JMA relied on military terrain analysis to identify the boundaries of the Rearguard Defense and Strategic Retreat study areas.

New Research Materials

The newly discovered Robertson Map and subsequent works by Thomas J. McGuire and Thomas Harris shed new light on the Battle of the Brandywine events that took place within Delaware County.

British Captain Archibald Robertson created the map titled *Plan of the Battle of Brandywine* immediately following the battle. Located in the King's Map Collection within the Royal Library at Windsor Castle, the map was newly discovered by author Thomas J. McGuire.



The map figured prominently in his 2006 book, *The Philadelphia Campaign: Brandywine and the Fall of Philadelphia*.



Michael C. Harris' 2014 work, *Brandywine: A Military History of the Battle that Lost Philadelphia but Saved America, September 11, 1777*, relied on

McGuire's updated understanding of troop location.

Defining Features of the Brandywine Battlefield Study Area

● Defining Feature

--- Defining Feature

Troop Locations

— American

— British

□ Battlefield Study Area

□ Municipal Boundaries

□ Delaware County

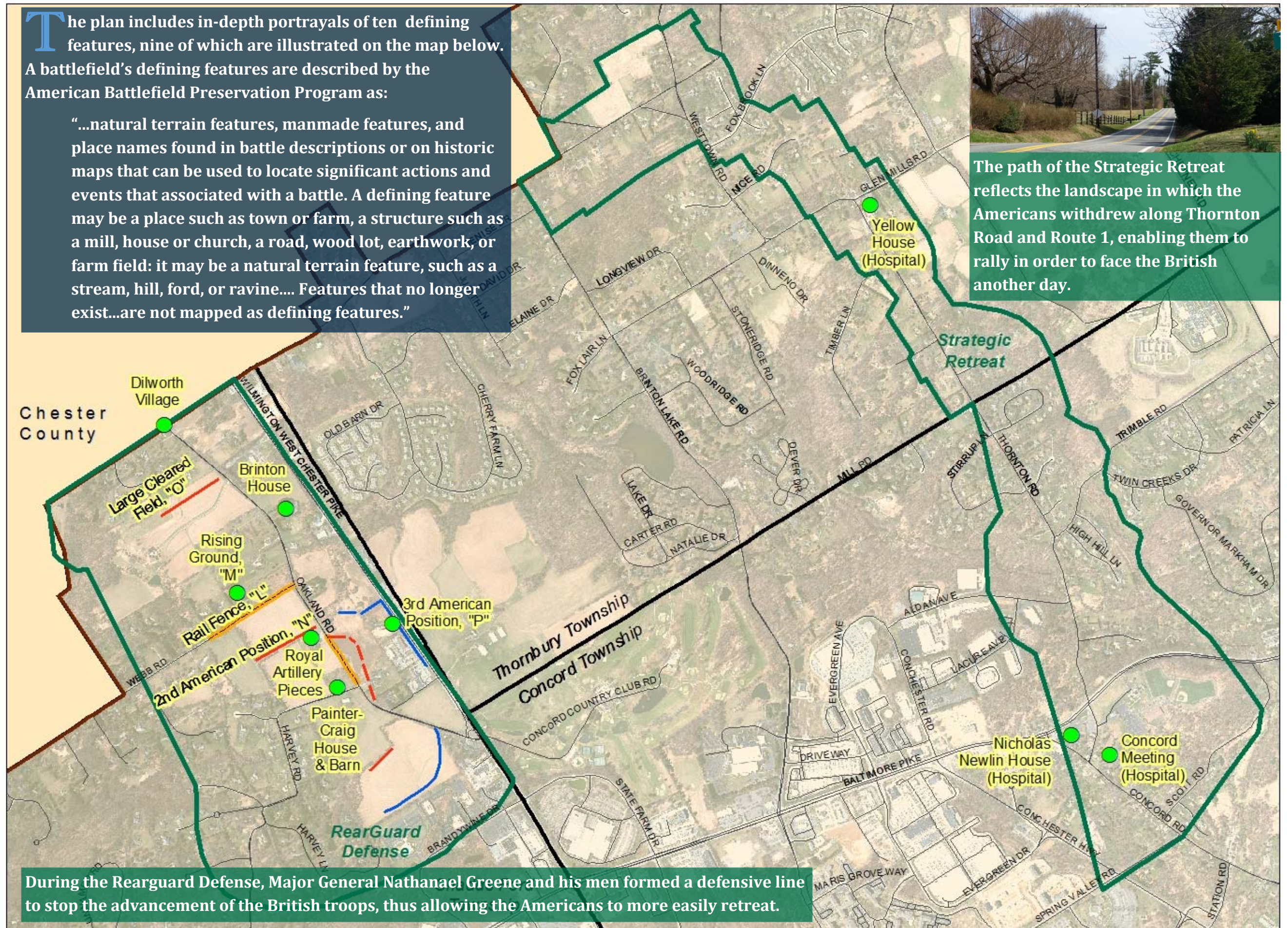
Prepared by
Delaware County
Planning Department

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Feet

Disclaimer
This map is for analytical
purposes only. The
reliability of this map
depends on the accuracy
of the underlying data
sources which have not
been verified.

The plan includes in-depth portrayals of ten defining features, nine of which are illustrated on the map below. A battlefield's defining features are described by the American Battlefield Preservation Program as:

"...natural terrain features, manmade features, and place names found in battle descriptions or on historic maps that can be used to locate significant actions and events that associated with a battle. A defining feature may be a place such as town or farm, a structure such as a mill, house or church, a road, wood lot, earthwork, or farm field: it may be a natural terrain feature, such as a stream, hill, ford, or ravine.... Features that no longer exist...are not mapped as defining features."



RESEARCH TAKE-AWAYS

Boundary Clarification

The eastern boundary of the Rearguard Defense has been a subject of some debate. Earlier maps depicted the eastern extent of the encounter as an arc that extended northeast of Route 202 near its intersection with Oakland Rd.; however, the Robertson map showed that the northeastern boundary followed 202. The eastern boundary has now been revised to run along Route 202 rather than arc east of it.

An inventory of battlefield assets was conducted in order to create the interpretation plans. These assets each have the potential to help educate and engage the public about the battle.

Gateway Site

- ◆ Brandywine Battlefield Park

Public Historic Sites

- ◆ 1704 House
- ◆ Yellow House
- ◆ Newlin Grist Mill
- ◆ Concord Meetinghouse
- ◆ Concord Township Municipal Building

Viewing Corridors

- ◆ Greene Defense Viewing Corridor
- ◆ Washington's Retreat

Heritage Center

- ◆ Washington's Withdrawal: Dilworthtown

Clockwise from top right: Yellow House, 1704 House, Concord Township Municipal Building, Newlin Grist Mill, Concord Meetinghouse



NEXT STEPS

The plan explores two avenues of approach to capitalize on the rich history of the Battle of the Brandywine. The first avenue discusses the preservation options available within the wishes of the townships and stakeholders who collaborated on the plan. The second avenue took all the ideas, facts, and concerns that were discussed by the Interpretation Working Group and created an Interpretive Network of different themes that would be communicated in a simple, self-contained manner.

Outlined within the plan are ideas using current planning strategies for battlefield protection and some nontraditional planning concepts. These concepts include:

- ◆ Public Education
- ◆ Building Conservation
- ◆ Voluntary Design Guidelines
- ◆ Archeology Education
- ◆ Certified Local Government
- ◆ Cluster Developments
- ◆ Transfer of Development Rights
- ◆ Existing Tools to Promote Agriculture
- ◆ Funding Opportunities

The Interpretation Network identifies seven varied themes that appeal to different audiences and that can be communicated using different methods to encourage a wide audience to connect with the Battle of the Brandywine, including:

- ◆ General Understanding of the Battle of Brandywine:
The Battle as a Pivotal Event in the American Revolution
- ◆ Living to Fight Another Day:
Strategic Retreating as a Tactical Maneuver
- ◆ Saving the American Army from Disaster:
The Rearguard Defense
- ◆ Treating the Injured:
Exploring Delaware County's Role
- ◆ From Encampment to Retreat:
The Tremendous Impact on Delaware County Communities
- ◆ Remembering Those Who Sacrificed:
Rearguard Defense & Strategic Retreat
- ◆ War in a Peaceful Valley:
The Quaker Community and the Battle of Brandywine

Both of the outlined continuing efforts listed above are complete with detailed action plans that include both short term and mid-to-long term recommendations in the preservation plan. If you would like to read the plan, please visit <http://www.co.delaware.pa.us/planning/pubs/StrategicLandscapesPreservationPlan.html>.

Historical Interpretation

Interpretation refers to the ways in which information is conveyed to visitors and the general public, often installed at historic sites or museums. Interpretative materials communicate a message using original objects and narratives so that the public understands not only what took place during a significant event but also its meaning within a broader historical context.

While not a typical topic in the planning field, interpretation has been included in this plan because the first step in protecting battlefields is for the public to recognize their importance.

Pictured below is one of the sample brochures featured in the preservation plan. Visitors can use the brochures to conduct self-guided tours of the seven themes or at specific battlefield sites.

Discovering Unknown Stories: Battle of Brandywine

Strategic Retreating as a Tactical Maneuver



Acknowledgments

Delaware County Council

Mario J. Civera, Chairman
Colleen P. Morrone, Vice Chairman
John P. McBlain
David J. White
Michael Culp

County Executive

Marianne Grace

Delaware County Planning Commission

William C. Payne, Chairman
Thomas J. Judge, Sr., Vice Chairman
Kenneth Zitarelli, Secretary
Kathy A. Bogosian
Lorraine Bradshaw
Josephine M. Laird
Patrick L. Patterson
Christine Valerio

Delaware County Planning Department

Linda F. Hill, Director
Beverlee Barnes, Historic Preservation Manager
Jill N. Hall, AICP, Principal Planner
Laura Proctor, Associate Planner
Anne Stauffer, GIS Coordinator



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Wade Catts, Principal Historian/Archeologist
Elisabeth LaVigne, Geomorphologist
Kevin Donaghy, Historical Archeologist
Kathryn Wood, Administrative Assistant

