



DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE

NEW CASTLE COUNTY HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD

Recommendation

HISTORIC ZONING DISTRICT

Jester Farm – 2818 Grubb Road

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The New Castle County Historic Review Board has initiated the application for a historic zone overlay district for property located at 2818 Grubb Road. At a public hearing held on November 13, 2002, the Historic Review Board recommended that this property, within the boundaries and according to the criteria set forth below, has historic significance and is, therefore, eligible for designation as a historic zoning district.

BOUNDARIES

The proposed boundaries of the historic zoning district coincide with the boundaries of tax parcel 06-021.00-033, which total approximately 25.8 acres.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

The Historic Review Board has determined that the property at 2818 Grubb Road, known as the "Jester Farm" meets the minimum age requirement for historic zoning and has historic significance according to Criteria B, D, E, J, K and L as set forth in Section 15.110 of the *New Castle County Unified Development Code (NCC UDC)*.

The resource must be fifty (50) years old.

The Jester Farm was constructed prior to 1953. The dwelling and carriage house are characteristic of mid-19th century structures.

Criterion B: *"Has significant character, interest, or values as an example of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the County, the State or the United States."*

As a rare intact farmstead in Brandywine Hundred the Jester Farm property is an example of the early development of the Hundred, before the suburbanization that occurred in the 20th century.

Criterion D: *“Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.”*

Once an area scattered with various size farmsteads, large estates, and summer homes for Philadelphia’s elite, the Jester Farm is an example of a less recognized part of Brandywine’s history, that of a moderately sized farmstead.

Criterion E: *“Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen.”*

The wagon barn and house, two structures thought to be built at the same time, are similar in their rare construction details; both structures use stone and frame construction within the main four walls of the building.

The house has a frame wing and a stone wing (which came first is unclear at this time). The stone section however, only has three sides assembled of stone and an end wall assembled of frame. This is an unusual construction type.

The site and house are examples of mid-19th century landscape features that once dotted northern New Castle County; there are now only a few scattered examples still present in the area. The Jester Farm is one of the few that has some of its original landscape setting still intact.

Criterion J: *“Is a landmark; that is, an established and familiar visual feature which assists in defining the character of the neighborhood, community or County due to its unique location or singular physical characteristic.”*

The Jester Farm site is an established feature along Grubb Road and in Brandywine Hundred. It is one of the few un-suburbanized areas of the Hundred and possibly the only farmstead remaining along Grubb Road. Due in part to the ingenuity of New Castle County Parks, the site is still used as a farm for High Point Dairy, which allows neighbors and the citizens of New Castle County the opportunity to benefit a glimpse into the history of the surrounding area.

Criterion K: *“Has yielded or is likely to yield information of importance to prehistory State’s or United State’s history.”*

Given the age of the farmstead and the minimal disturbance of the site, the potential for the discovery of prehistoric and historic archaeological evidence is highly probable.

Criterion L: *“Is associated with the lives of persons important to the County’s past.”*

The Jester and Day families are associated with the property; both families participated in the historical development of this area and were directly associated with the property.

CLASSIFICATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

The site is identified as an **Enclosed Context Site**, "A site where the vegetation, topography and/or surrounding development limit the context of the building leaving a small view area. A historic buffer of two hundred (200) feet around the buildings or other features shall be identified as the site. At the discretion of the Department, a different configuration or size of the historic buffer may be considered if the preservation of the resource is enhanced." (Section 15.111 NCC UDC)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Historic Review Board voted to determine that the Jester Farm is historically significant and along with the strong community report recommend to County Council that the historic zone overlay be applied to the property at 2818 Grubb Road.

VOTE: 5-0-0-1 (Yay, Nay, Abstain, Absent)
(Yes: Catts, Cloonan, Neff, Reed, Shields; *Absent*: Crumplar)
