

Scenic Resources Plan

Introduction

Scenic resources contribute to resident quality of life and Township rural character. As such, they are more than simply pretty scenes, and constitute considerable public benefit. For example, views from public roads are in essence public views and, in that sense, public resources. Scenic resources are visually significant assets to the Township as a unique place.

Scenery and scenic objects are considered ‘visually significant’ when they characterize historic development and/or natural, ‘pre-settlement’ landscapes of an area. The combination of natural and man-made features and areas helps form the inherent local character and visual image that Kennett Township residents value as home. This Chapter highlights scenic resources that are important contributors to the overall Township scenic landscape and addresses potential negative impacts on these resources, so that they can be protected from loss or intrusions from inappropriate land use practices and in conjunction with other resources.

Chapter Organization:

Existing Conditions Overview p. 6-1

Types of Scenic Resources p. 6-2

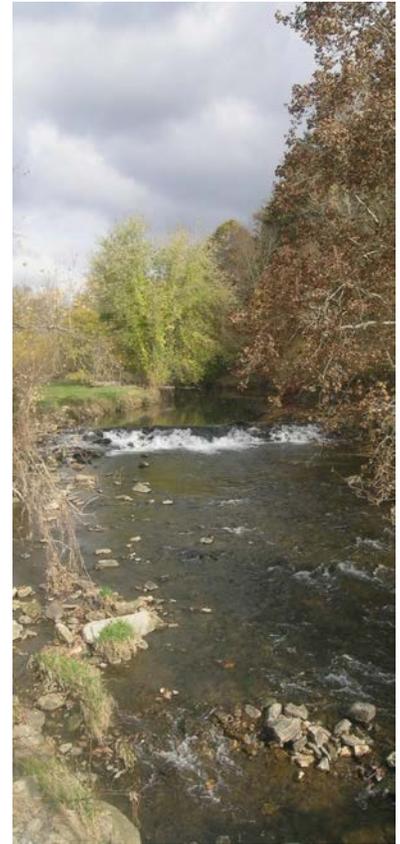
Scenic Features
Scenic Roads
Scenic Views
Scenic Landscapes

Intrusions to the Scenic Landscape p. 6-8

Incompatible Development and Maintenance
Utility Facilities
Outdoor Advertising and Signage
Light Pollution

Resource Standards Summary p. 6-14

Recommendations p. 6-14



Existing Conditions Overview

Kennett Township is approximately 10,000 acres or 15.6 square miles in the Piedmont region of southern Chester County. It lies within three watersheds: the Red Clay Creek (85%) and White Clay Creek (5%) (both flowing to the south) and Brandywine River tributaries (10%) (flowing to the east). Notably, headwater areas comprise over half (56%) of the Township. Elevation ranges from around 200’ to 450’ above sea level. Surface topography is comprised of generally gently rolling hills and knolls drained primarily by three generally south-running streams, all a part of the Red Clay Creek system including East and West branches of Red Clay Creek and Burrows Run. Riparian slopes are steeper in the southwestern section of the Township. Lowest elevations in the Township are found along southern drainageways, where Red Clay

Creek and Burrows Run flow into DE. There is a contrasting and scenic landscape effect in this area of hilltops and stream valleys, and it is in this area of the Township where most of the steep slopes are found.

Euro-American farming settlements took shape in the largely wooded 18th century Township and many historic structures from the era still remain. Remaining woodlands include interior forests that occupy about 1/3 of the Township land area. Most commercial and higher density development generally is located near the Borough and along Routes 1 and 52, while suburban residential subdivisions have increasingly occurred in pockets throughout the Township. Scenic farmsteads, historic, rural, and wooded landscapes still are predominant in some areas, largely the southern sections of the Township, and form a background weaving through and behind newer residential areas; though that acreage and those scenic landscapes have been steadily shrinking with conversions into new residential uses.¹

Types of Scenic Resources

Scenic resources help define the look and feel of the Township. They overlap and encompass various other types of resources, e.g. historic structures, natural features, or rural roads. Defining scenic resources can appear to entail a subjective determination; however, the PA Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC) recognizes them as worthy of community planning and protection consideration. In 2002, a Visually Significant Resources Analysis (2002 Analysis) identified scenic features, roads, vistas, and landscapes that are significant in creating the overall scenic character of the Township. The 2002 Analysis identified around 46 percent of the Township as scenic landscape.

Scenic Features

Scenic Features can be natural or man-made. Natural Features include individual objects (e.g. wetlands or heritage trees) and larger geographic areas with consistency in form and type (e.g. hedgerows or stream valleys). Man-Made Features include fabricated articles containing inherent scenic value and generally more limited geographic scale (e.g. historic farmsteads, stone walls, or historic bridges).

Natural resources and open spaces are integral to the scenic quality of Kennett Township. **Scenic Natural Features** contribute to the rural and scenic character of the Township, provide areas for recreation, and maintain areas needed for critical habitats and ecosystems. Natural landforms can serve as a scenic backdrop or foreground for other resource types, e.g. farmsteads or historic sites.

Not all scenic resources are created by nature. **Scenic Man-Made Features**, e.g. split rail fences, stone walls, mills, stone bridges, farmsteads, historic homes, and villages, e.g. Hamorton and Mendenhall, offer scenic quality to the Township. Like their natural features counter-parts, historic structures and rural land uses typically employ local building materials, such as fieldstone and locally derived timber, and along with farmsteads and farm-related features, including heritage trees and hedgerows, are emblematic of lifestyle patterns traditional to this region.

Local Initiatives

The Township's 2002 Analysis identified scenic features as elements of scenic landscapes and includes extensive natural features and historic resources. Natural features identified are those that contribute to scenic significance including wetlands, stream valleys, heritage trees, hedgerows, woodlots, rolling hills, meadows, pastures, and open lands. Rock outcroppings and locally important vegetation (native plants, historic/mature woodlands, and vegetated areas in Anson B Nixon Park) are other natural scenic features. There is an emphasis on native plants since they have evolved over time in place and under local

¹ Excerpted from the 2002 Kennett Township Visually Significant Resources Analysis

conditions; they provide a certain kind of uniqueness to an area. This is in contrast to introduced plantings, widely used in new development, that result in a monotonous and generic landscape making areas look uniform with other areas. Current Township regulations recognize streams, steep slopes, floodplains, woodlands, wetlands, hedgerows, specimen vegetation, and heritage trees. Zoning and SLDO also include woodlands classification mapping and riparian and woodland corridors mapping.

The 2002 Analysis includes historic structures as scenic landscape features and an element of scenic roads. Like native plants, historic structures that often employ local building materials along with heritage trees and hedgerows are emblematic of traditional lifestyle patterns in the area and thus capture an area's scenic quality. In maintaining or repairing man-made scenic features, it is important to preserve the integrity and character of the original or parts of the structure(s) and feature(s) that make it 'scenic'. Historic resource protection strategies can be utilized to preserve these resources. Current Township zoning and SLDO recognizes and includes mapping of historic resource. As well, there is a Township Historical Commission to advise Township officials and provide technical assistance and education to the public on historic resources. The Township's commitment to protecting its scenic rural qualities is evidenced in the design of the Township building, which blends in style and materials with historic structures in the area, and through participation in regional groups, e.g. KARPC's Historical Committee, Brandywine Battlefield Task Force and an undertaking to survey historic mills and mill ruins along the Red Clay Creek.

Scenic Roads

Scenic Roads, in addition to their transportation function, provide a distinctive traveling experience due to their physical characteristics, such as narrow widths, open views, canopies of tree cover, or informal alignments (e.g. a winding rural road).

Scenic Roads are roads where scenic resources make up a significant part of the viewer experience. They provide visual (passive) access to other scenic resources, e.g. open spaces, farmsteads, and natural resources, which add to and are characteristic of the Township's scenic quality. They may include Scenic Views or Features (e.g. the Osage orange tree canopies in the Township that date to circa early 19th century). Scenic roads provide a close to home outlet for sightseeing. A scenic road ideally should pass through or border a variety of characteristic landscapes (sometimes referred to as its scenic corridor), be relatively free of visual intrusions, and be expressive of the landforms and topography it traverses.

Local Initiatives

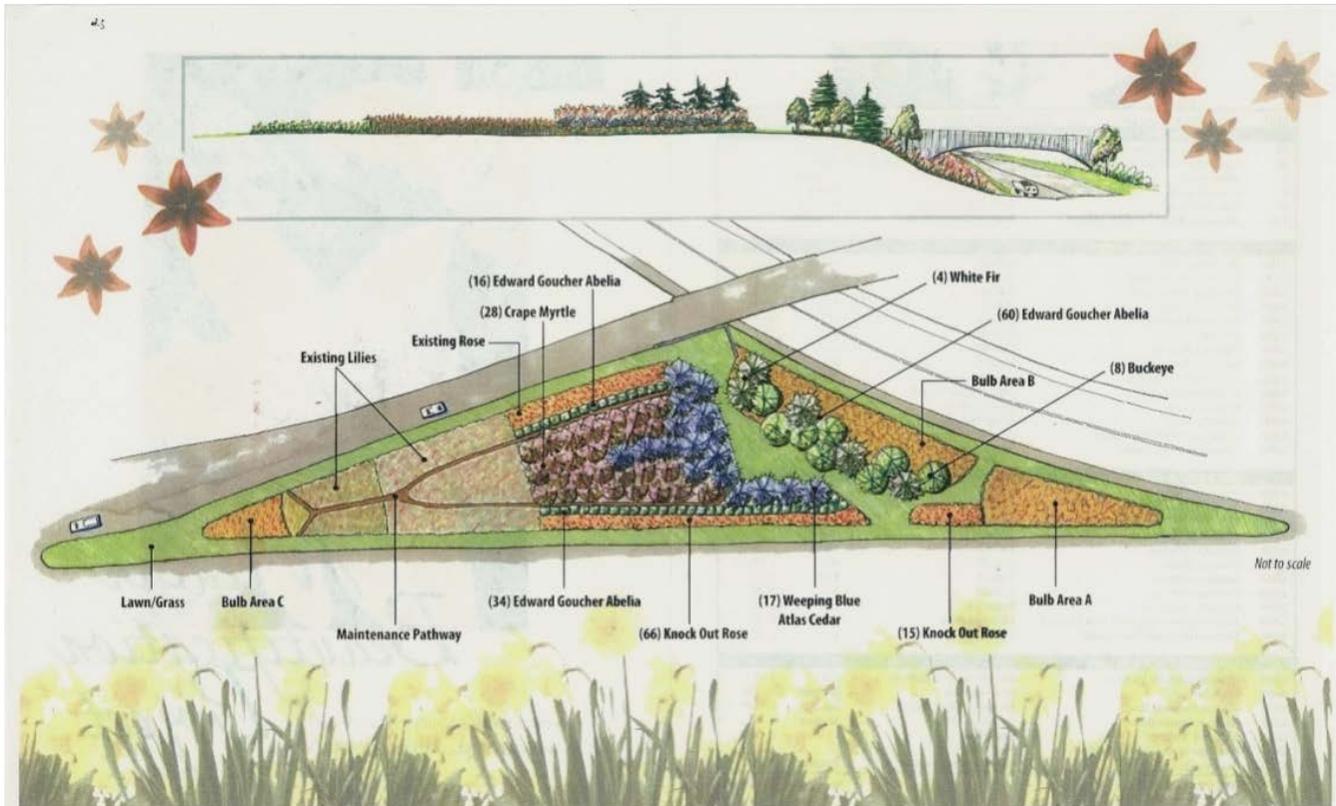
Scenic roads are important to the Township as they add to and help retain the rural character. The Township identified 16 scenic roads in its 2002 Analysis, which are shown on the Visually Significant Resources Map in zoning and SLDO. Chester County's Scenic Roads Handbook¹ was used as a guide.

Planning for scenic roads is an integral part of retaining the character of a community. In some instances, though, the same elements that make a road scenic also detract from its safety. Scenic road planning needs to balance maintaining important elements of scenic quality with providing for appropriate levels of traffic volumes and safety, and recognizing the importance of traffic calming on the Township's many rural roads. For example, keeping in place the Township's narrow, curvy, two-lane roads and one-lane bridges maintains the rural and historic scenic Township character and inherently slows traffic without having to invest additional resources into copious additional signage and road 'improvements'.

Local control of roads enables local decision-making, and for roads that are determined to be significant scenic resources this option can ensure their protection. Return of state roads to municipal control is possible via the Turn Back of State Roads program. While PennDOT can perform immediately necessary repairs prior to turning over a road, road turn back requires eventual significant long-term municipal commitment in terms of future road maintenance and repairs.

¹ Scenic Roads Handbook, Local Gov't Handbook #3, CCPC, 1984

In 2010, the Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) initiated a road cleanup and beautification effort, **Kennett Township 'Garden Way' project**, on the Route 1 interchange, the eastern gateway to the Kennett Square area. The Township provided funding for the initial flowerbed preparation, and over 70 volunteers including Longwood Gardens and the Lions Club were involved. Nearly 30,000 blooming lilies and 200 Knock Out® Roses were planted in a 5,300 sq. ft. bed on the traffic island at the Interchange. In 2011, the project was recognized as the ‘best municipal beautification project’ in PA. In 2012, the 'Garden Way' project received national recognition when it received the 1st place title for ‘Beautification and Community Greening’ by the Keep America Beautiful initiative. The project and its volunteers were recognized for the “outstanding cleanup and beautification effort that transformed a barren traffic island into a dazzling island of flowers”. A landscaping plan for a second phase builds on the design and adds over 200 more plants.



State and Regional Initiatives

PA Byways Program, administered by PennDOT as an offshoot of the National Scenic Byways Program¹, seeks to enhance a road’s visual impact, retain its intrinsic qualities, and highlight and maintain associated archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities. It also promotes citizen education about state history and culture, and advances access to opportunities for funding. Local support is a critical element of the Program and promotes communities taking pride in their scenic resources, serving in an active role in their protection, and creating new opportunities along a byway. Governmental entities nominate routes for consideration with the support of involved municipalities and counties plus the road(s)² owner.

¹ The National Scenic Byways Program was created under the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) with the goal of recognizing and promoting outstanding corridors throughout the U.S., promoting tourism, and protecting the character-defining corridor features and resources. Before a road can be designated under the national program, it must first be designated a PA Byway. Starting in the 1990’s, federal funding became available to states to create Scenic Byway Programs. In 2001, the PA Byways program was created and is managed under PennDot. As of 2011, there are 15 PA Byways, two of which are also designated as National Scenic Byways.

² Though, if the route is not a state-maintained highway, the municipal or federal agency owner must first designate it.

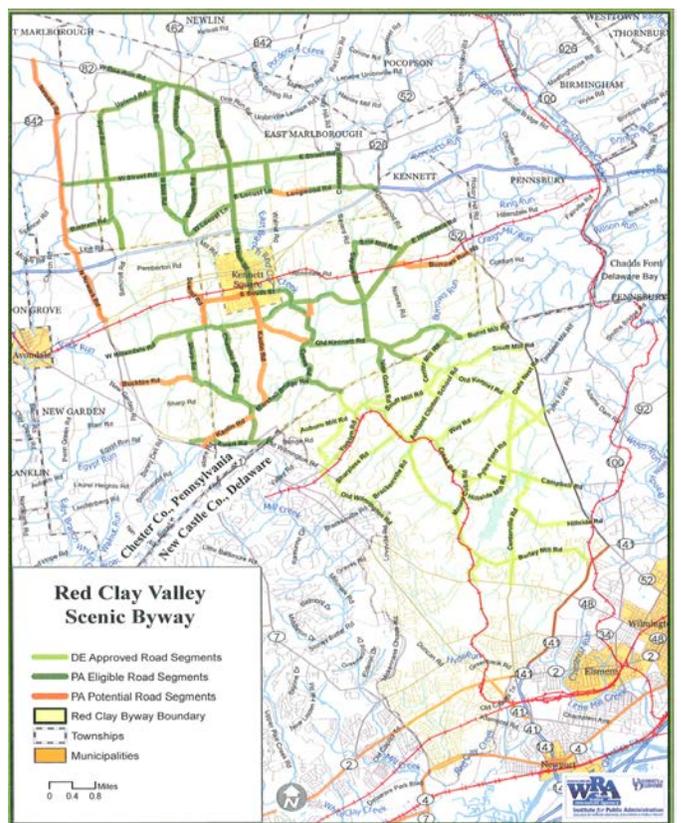
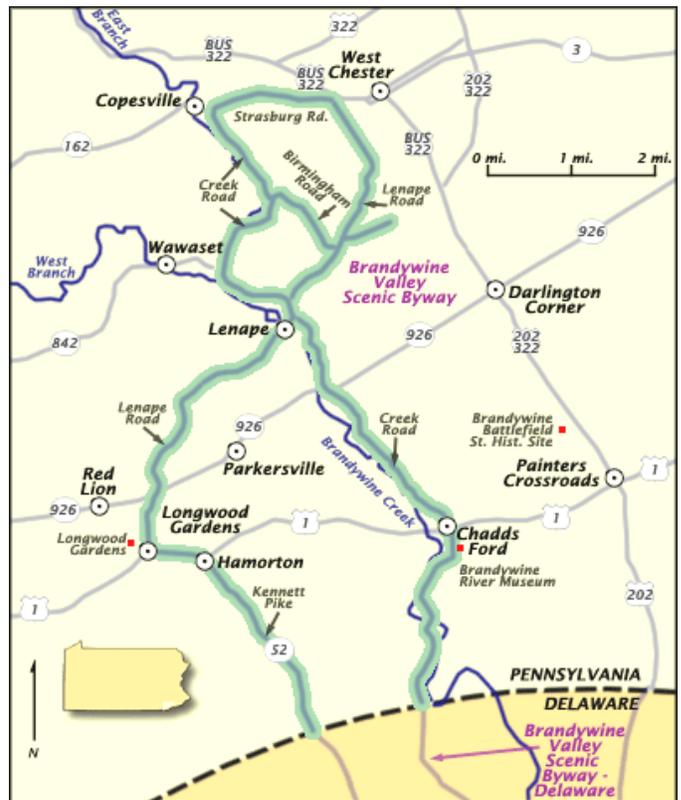
Municipalities can request a PA Byway designation individually or cooperatively with neighboring communities to protect a longer segment of scenic road. PennDOT, upon request, then determines whether a nominated route becomes a designated PA Byway. In addition to highlighting scenic, historic, cultural, recreational, natural, and archaeological resources along a road, designation offers some minimum protection to the corridor, as outdoor advertising is prohibited on designated byways.

Initiated in 2002 as a grass roots effort by local communities, the 25-mile **Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway** (BVSB) became a PA Byway in April 2005. In March 2006, those communities in Chester and Delaware Counties (Kennett, Pennsbury, East Marlborough, Pocopson, Birmingham, East Bradford, and Chadds Ford Townships) formed the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Commission (BVSBC) via intergovernmental agreement. The BVSB connects with the byway in DE of the same name resulting in an interconnected regional corridor. The DE section holds a state as well as a national byway designation. In 2014, BVSBC developed a Corridor Management Plan(CMP) to define and implement objectives and strategies consistent with the intent of a state byway. A CMP provides a byway management program by:

1) developing strategies to preserve and enhance resources (scenic, natural, historic, archaeological, cultural, recreation) that define the byway while 2) addressing the impacts of development pressure, traffic volumes, and tourism implications on these resources. A CMP also addresses, among other items, recommendations for the byway corridor’s landscaping and signage. The ultimate purposes of a CMP are to maintain/improve the quality and continuity of a byway corridor while protecting its resources, interpreting the area’s history, supporting cultural tourism and other appropriate economic development initiatives, accommodating recreation, and supporting land conservation efforts. The CMP can provide sufficient documentation to apply for National Scenic Byway Designation, if wanted. In 2010, additional grant funding was awarded for a Byway Bikeway Plan to extend DE’s National BVSB bikeway north along Route 52 into PA to the Pocopson Township line. The **Harriet Tubman Trail to Freedom Initiative**, which will coincide with part of BVSBC’s route, provides additional historic scenic resources in the area.

The **proposed Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway** is a watershed-based planning effort, unlike other scenic byways in the nation. Red Clay scenic byway efforts originated in the DE portion of the watershed where nearly 30 roads were designated in 2005 as scenic and are now protected by the Red Clay Valley Association (RCVA). This success prompted consideration to explore expanding the scenic byway north into PA. The PA portion being proposed would connect to the already existing state designated byway in DE of the same name, thus resulting in an interconnected regional corridor. The purpose of the proposed effort in PA is to preserve historic, cultural, natural, and scenic resources throughout the watershed.

RCVA is spearheading the PA effort working in partnership with the communities of New Garden, Kennett, Kennett



Square, Pennsbury, East Marlborough, and West Marlborough. Like all byway efforts, the support of local governments is needed and byway members are involved in its planning and management on a cooperative basis. Steps to form a recognized byway in PA include: 1) exploring community interest through outreach efforts, 2) submitting an Expression of Interest Form to PennDOT, 3) submitting a Byways application for scenic road designation to PennDOT, and 4) after byway designation is awarded, preparing a Corridor Management Plan.

PennDOT administered **PA Highway Beautification Programs** can help maintain and improve the Township's scenic road landscapes. For all programs, PennDOT provides safety training for volunteers, orange safety vests, highway warning signs, and trash bags for use during litter pick-up periods. PennDOT picks up the bagged litter from the roadside and posts roadside signs acknowledging an organization's participation in a Highway Beautification Program. More information is on PennDOT's website: www.dot.state.pa.us.

- **Adopt-A-Highway Program** is designed to reduce litter and the overall cost of litter removal throughout the Commonwealth. Civic or volunteer groups sign a two-year program participation request to 'adopt' a two-mile portion of state highway picking-up litter at least four times per year.
- **Adopt and Beautify Program** volunteers expand upon PennDOT's landscaping and planting efforts to cultivate wildflowers and/or other approved plantings along state roads for two-years. In return, PennDOT posts signs recognizing the volunteer efforts.
- **Great PA Cleanup Program**, as part of the Keep PA/America Beautiful initiative, since 1978 is a springtime statewide community cleanup program to rid highways, neighborhoods, trails, parks, and open spaces of litter. Communities are asked to organize and conduct local cleanups including recruiting volunteers, promoting the event, and reporting the results for inclusion in statewide and national cleanup tallies. For more information, go to www.keeppabeautiful.org.
- **Sponsor-A-Highway Program** involves businesses and interested parties to sign agreements with Adopt-A-Highway Maintenance Corporation, PennDOT's contracted vendor, to perform maintenance roadside work including litter and graffiti removal, sweeping, landscaping, plantings, and mowing. This program provides sponsoring organizations with positive recognition of their support to their communities and advertising on roadside signs that name and acknowledge the sponsor(s).



Scenic Views

Scenic Views are physiographic areas composed of natural, historic, rural, agricultural, and/or cultural features that have inherent scenic qualities and may be viewable from a public place (e.g. the view of a pristine historic farmstead from a public road right-of-way).

Scenic Views, Viewsheds, Vistas, or Viewscapes are those directional views visible from a single site that capture a panoramic sense of the landscape. They provide a larger context, showing how local elements fit together to form a certain defining character. From scenic views, elements flow together into a harmonious holistic scene. Examples include broad views of stream valleys, watersheds, and wooded areas. The overall backdrop provides the scenic view, while the foreground may or may not be scenic.

Local Initiatives

The 2002 Analysis identified 14 scenic vistas that are shown on the Visually Significant Resources Map in zoning and SLDO. Though the Township may not be able to preserve an entire scenic viewshed (immediate and distant), attempts can be made to ensure the vista is not visually obstructed in the foreground and immediate area, and to preserve contiguous land areas in the viewshed and its key elements.

Scenic Landscapes

Scenic Landscapes are those geographic areas considered visually significant that contain more than one of the Township’s valued natural or cultural resources in a context of diverse views with scenic highlights (e.g. a scenic valley including farmsteads, historic structures, meadows, pastures, and hedgerows).

A scenic landscape (or panorama) is the broadest category of scenic resource. It can encompass one or more resource types and features - natural, historic, rural, agricultural, and cultural. For example, a scenic landscape may include a farmstead, hedgerow, meadow, heritage tree, or knoll (or all of these) within a viewable sight distance. A scenic

corridor is a type of scenic landscape that is linear, e.g. a road or waterway plus its adjacent lands and elements.

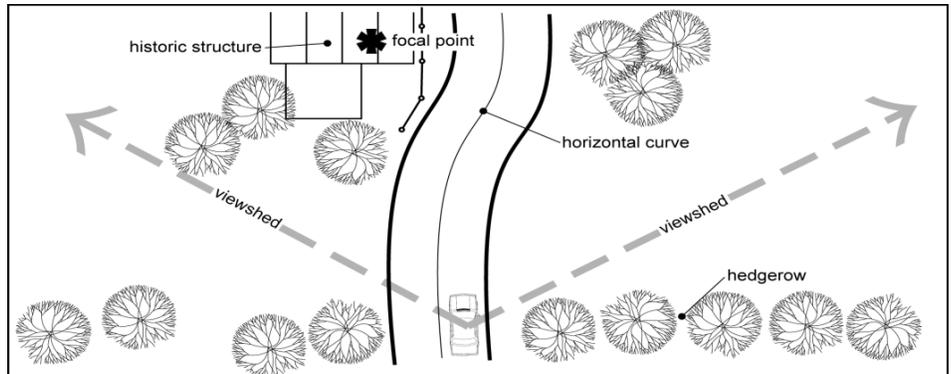


Figure 6-1: Typical Elements of a Scenic Landscape

Scenic landscapes broaden the experience of the viewer beyond the immediate location to encompass those further reaching attributes within view. A scenic landscape may be composed of natural and cultural attributes that range from wide-open views of rolling lands with expansive farmsteads to individual historic houses, barns, and bridges. Scenic landscapes can include steeply wooded slopes, wetlands, woodlots, pastures, and stream valleys. Viewed together, the various individual scenic attributes and their interrelationships form a tapestry and provide the overall characteristic Township scenic landscape. These characteristic elements contribute to the overall vibrancy of local natural and cultural systems and reflect the essential heritage of Kennett Township.

As they can encompass a variety and number of resources, scenic landscapes are highly sensitive, and development, especially which is insensitive in siting and design, can result in the destruction of their intrinsic qualities. For example, development that involves clear-cutting woodlands and locally important vegetation or that provides inappropriate buffering and screening will interfere with and destroy scenic features. While the Township cannot preserve all scenic landscapes, it is important to identify and strive to preserve the most significant ones that retain the rural landscape and character of the Township.

Local Initiatives

The 2002 Analysis identified scenic landscapes in the Township as plentiful though fragmented. Most scenic landscapes occur along stream corridors. Larger areas of contiguous scenic landscape are mainly identified in the southern and western parts of the Township. Other notable scenic areas in the northern part of the Township are around Longwood Gardens, Hillendale Road, and Bayard Road. Scenic landscapes are included on the Visually Significant Resources Map in zoning and SLDO. A recent initiative led by local citizens was to preserve the historic Chandler Mill Bridge and its surrounds, which is identified as part of a scenic landscape in the 2002 Analysis Map. The intent is to turn the scenic area into a primarily (with the exception of emergency vehicle access) pedestrian scenic corridor.



Regional Initiatives

Brandywine Battlefield Preservation Plan (2013) identified defining battlefield-related features that remain today and still show the 1777 landscape and story of the battle and American Revolution locally. These defining features individually can be considered as scenic features and together as a scenic

landscape. The 2013 Plan includes recommendations for preserving and interpreting the battlefield as a landscape of national significance, which implements Landscapes².

As part of the White Clay Creek watershed, the southwestern tip of the Township falls within the nationally recognized **White Clay Creek National Wild and Scenic River** designated area¹. This is a scenic area that is of national natural resources significance and its ongoing protection is guided under a Management Plan.

Intrusions to the Scenic Landscape

In addition to inventorying existing scenic resources, this Chapter examines items that can be contrary to scenic resource and Township character protection to determine in order to try to deter negative impacts on the larger visual setting. Scenic intrusions are those man-made objects or structures that detract from the overall landscape and may include:

- ❑ Incompatible or poorly sited/designed development (residential, commercial, industrial, parking);
- ❑ Buildings that use styles disjunctive to neighboring buildings and the surrounding area;
- ❑ Residential structures that do not fit the landscape context (e.g., land that has been extensively regraded for the purpose of siting a house);
- ❑ Residential areas that have been extensively landscaped with non-native vegetation;
- ❑ Suburban homes built very close to a rural landscape road and well within the public view;
- ❑ Light pollution;
- ❑ Inappropriate outdoor advertising and signage;
- ❑ Above-ground utility structures, stormwater management facilities, and transmission lines; and
- ❑ Unmaintained properties.

A single prominent intrusion can diminish a scenic landscape. The extent to which topography, landscaping features, and development siting allow or obscure views is an important consideration.

A comprehensive inventory of existing scenic intrusions was not developed as part of this Plan, as existing intrusions are difficult to change. However, avoiding the creation of new scenic intrusions is a feasible goal for this Plan, and the discussion below focuses on this purpose. The following intrusions are those that have the potential to impact the Township’s scenic quality and can in part be addressed via zoning and SLDO provisions. Though ordinance standards alone cannot address all scenic concerns, and the Township should keep in mind that it may be possible to address these items with land developers and residents.

Incompatible Development and Maintenance

The most obvious way that scenic qualities are readily compromised and potentially lost is through development. While large scale land development can impact significant scenic features at one time, so to smaller scale development and improvements can impact scenic elements though incrementally and over time. Poor quality and incompatible siting and design are key items to address in working to rectify the destruction of scenic qualities during land development and other physical improvements.

Land Development Issues

Poorly sited or designed development, whether residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, or mixed use, that ignores a site’s context and extant resources is incompatible with the existing landscape, a landscape specifically chosen for the land development. Working early on with developers in the infancy

¹ In 2000, federal legislation designated White Clay Creek and its tributaries in DE and PA as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, which was the first time an entire watershed - rather than just a section of a river - was designated as part of the Wild and Scenic System. The White Clay Creek is Wild and Scenic River protected in its entirety. This ‘beyond-the-riverbank’ approach takes into consideration the variety of influences outside a river corridor that affect river habitat and water quality.

stages of development proposals, identifying scenic resources and creating/maintaining an up-to-date inventory, and requiring local protection of prioritized resources are methods the Township can employ to convey the importance and location of key resources to landowners and developers; thus enabling the possibility for site development design to be complementary to Township character. As well, the Township could consider developing and suggesting design guidelines (similar in specificity to guidance in Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook), which would assist Township review of a proposal's compatibility with the immediately surrounding landscape and overall Township character during the land development process. Items such as scale, materials, height, siting, proportion, open areas, and historic and natural resources are critical in maintaining a compatible character between the new and the existing.

Under Township zoning, the open space design option encourages limiting disturbance of significant natural and cultural resources and conserving scenic views from encroachment of development for example, through such means as locating proposed development outside of such views or retaining natural vegetation, existing structures, or existing topography. Standards in zoning for reviewing special exception requests consider potential impact on natural, scenic, and historic resources on the tract in question and its surroundings.

In the Township SLDO, while the term 'scenic' is not specifically used, many of the types of scenic resources discussed in this Chapter are required to be identified on proposed land development plans. Regulations limiting woodland disturbance during development take into account the importance of balancing the benefits of woodland preservation/replacement with other valuable resources on the site, including the protection of scenic views and the creation of a less visually intrusive layout. Where existing trees are to remain during development, no change in existing grade is permitted within the tree's dripline, and prior to land disturbance, appropriate fencing four feet high is to be placed at those tree's dripline, when they are near proposed construction. Maintaining specimen trees is encouraged whereby those retained in development can be credited toward tree replacement requirements.

Road and Bridge Design and Improvement Issues

Road construction, expansion, repairs, or improvements can yield significant impacts on the local environment, including possible negative impacts to scenic, natural, historic, or agricultural resources. Thus, it is critical for the local community to be involved to the extent possible at the earliest stages of road projects to convey the presence and location of critical priority resources in the Township in order to achieve a successful project result that serves to balance transportation needs while protecting community resources. Replacement bridges and roadway improvements should attempt to be sensitive to the character of the Township and the immediately surrounding area by using context sensitive design. Township SLDO regulations require a historic resources impact study for roadway and bridge projects that fall within 300 feet of the exterior walls of historic resources.



Parking Design and Landscaping Issues

Inefficient parking lot design can cause safety concerns as well as issues of function and aesthetics. Parking facilities can be designed to help promote safer and more natural or scenic parking. Key parking design issues include: access, location, layout, surface treatment, screening/buffering, and landscaping. Though it may seem a superfluous consideration, a lack of landscaping, screening, or buffering in parking areas can greatly impact its quality, use, and the Township visual character overall. For example, endless pavement, lack of any vegetation, and the locational prominence of a parking area creates a scenic intrusion into the overall landscape. As parking is a feature of necessity for most land uses in most locations of the Township, appropriate layout and landscaping can turn a parking area into a more pleasant, safer, and more usable necessary feature of development.

Township ordinances address parking design and landscaping. Township SLDO provisions include parking design and landscaping, including requiring the use of native trees and plants to the maximum extent possible and landscaping to reduce wind and air turbulence, heat, noise, glare of automobile lights, and the level of carbon dioxide. Landscaping is also to provide shade, ameliorate stormwater drainage

problems, replenish the groundwater table, provide for a more attractive setting, and public safety. Township zoning allows shared or off-site parking by special exception and 25 percent of required parking to be held in reserve and developed later if needed which eliminates extra parking and lowers impervious coverage. Also, zoning requires in villages that parking be to the rear or side of nonresidential uses and be to the rear of residential uses as the site allows. For adaptive reuse of historic structures, zoning requires that parking be located to the rear or where it is least intrusive from the public view.

In the future, if desired, the Township could also consider if there are other ways to effectively implement design standards to promote a more naturalistic and comfortable setting for parking areas, for example, by incorporating other rural landscapes elements, in addition to native trees, to complement the Township rural character. Another example is that specific landscaping standards may be considered in the Township's villages, which may differ from the rest of the Township, to promote the continued village character. The use of recommended design guidelines, outside of ordinances, is another approach, in addition to regulatory measures, to assist in implementing design standards. A design guideline could include illustrations depicting what is meant for example by naturalizing parking areas. Using ordinance language is the other more obvious approach, though language should continue to be flexible enough in the future to allow for other ideas, e.g. allowing parking in the rear of a commercial use or pervious paving for a portion of the required spaces, without compromising minimum needed standards.

Stormwater Management Design Issues

Stormwater management facilities may be required as part of new development or redevelopment, and their proper design can complement scenic quality. Incorporating stormwater detention basins into the overall development design to enhance their visual impact and mimic natural ponds or wetlands can contribute to scenic quality. In contrast, empty detention basins or a lack of landscaping or buffering can negatively affect scenic quality.

Ordinance language can be used to help achieve good design. Language should be flexible enough to allow for appropriate location, such as allowing stormwater facilities in open space, without compromising minimum standards. The Township SLDO addresses mitigating scenic impacts to stormwater management facilities and includes planting standards and recommended plantings for stormwater basins. It also encourages their design to replicate natural systems, such as ponds or wetlands, to the greatest extent possible, and employs best management practices (BMPs) into the project design to increase groundwater recharge, enhance water quality, and control post-construction runoff. Also in zoning, stormwater management facilities are only permitted in required green space or in required open space of the open space design option if they employ subsurface infiltration for groundwater recharge or are scenic or recreational in nature.

Fencing Design Issues

Proper and appropriate fence design guidelines and/or regulations can contribute a positive impact to the Township's scenic character. Front yard fences that are too high can impose on the scenic quality as well as cause vehicular site line hazards on roads. Currently, the Township does not specifically regulate fences in the zoning ordinance. The ordinance states that, for proper visibility along roads, at intersections, or at points of entry onto roads, no fence, wall, or vegetative growth may obscure vision.

Property Maintenance Issues

Abandoned buildings and/or unkempt structures or properties can become an eyesore, public nuisance, and health concern if not addressed. Chapter 168 of the Township Code explicitly deals with property maintenance. In addressing this type of scenic intrusion, enforcing basic property maintenance codes and building codes in the Township, and maintaining public health and safety are primary considerations. The Township also adopted a nuisance ordinance that provides support in addressing this and related issues.

Utility Facilities

Utilities are found in many forms. From a scenic planning perspective, viewable structures (e.g. cell towers, wind mills, solar arrays, stormwater facilities, and overhead transmission lines) are generally most prevalent and of most concern. Community sewer and water facilities as well as electric power substations are also a concern. As with other development, siting and design of these structures can be locally regulated to avoid, minimize, or mitigate certain impacts to scenic quality. Though control of certain utilities, e.g. cell towers, comes under the purview of state or federal agencies, municipalities retain some control, e.g. location (allow in certain zoning districts) and design (height and type of structure).

Above-Ground Utility Lines Issues

Overhead utility lines are often considered one of the most obvious and significant scenic intrusions. While little can be done to mitigate the impacts of existing lines and structures, new development or redevelopment in certain locations where applicable may warrant a requirement that lines be located below ground. Although costly to construct in the short term, in select locations this strategy can be beneficial in the long term not only for scenic reasons but also because they may be less subject to damage related to vehicular collisions, trees falling, and inclement weather conditions, in turn reducing maintenance costs. The cost and implementation of such strategy must be balanced with the technical capability for ongoing maintenance and repair of lines. To that end, temporary overhead utility emergency provisions should be permitted for situations where repair over a period of time is needed. Another option is for utilities to be sited on one side of a road. This allows for more landscaping plus lessens the visual impact of all of the various utility poles, lines, and cables. As of 2012, there are no Township regulations that specifically address this topic.



Cell Towers/Communication Towers Issues

Cell towers are a necessary component of the modern landscape with ever increasing cell phone use. They are a recognized commercial use that may not be arbitrarily excluded from a municipality. Towers can greatly impact scenic quality. While cell towers are not scenic in any setting, they can appear even more out of place, more of an intrusion, when set in a rural or natural landscape. The Township can control certain elements related to cell towers and their scenic impact. This item is also discussed in Chapter 10.

Under current Township zoning, cell or other communication towers are permitted by conditional use in several commercially-oriented districts¹. Township zoning requires landscaping around towers that shall be permanently maintained by the property owner. Requiring a tower's design to be as compatible with a scenic landscape as possible, is a consideration, and for example, requiring a tower to be a silo, tree, or flagpole design could be considered. Requiring a maintenance plan can help ensure some control over the tower and land surrounding it.

As well, other entities may also retain some control of utility design and location. For example, cell tower construction is considered to be a federal undertaking, which requires an official review of potential impacts to historic resources that are listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Also, certain conservation programs, such as the Chester County Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, may prohibit construction of cell towers as part of easement conditions. The program denies activities that do not constitute 'active agricultural production' on the accepted/participating parcels. Lands under conservation easement by any non-profit or government entity may have similar restrictions or prohibitions. For example, land held by The Land Trust for Southern Chester County (TLC) may have similar restrictions. As well, if a municipality chooses to enact an Act 167 historic district, any property located within that district may also be limited or restricted from hosting a communication facility, and at a minimum, a review of the impact to the district and on historic resources would be required.

¹ V-2 (Mendenhall village district), LI (Limited Industrial district), BP (Business Park district), C (Commercial district)

Alternative Energy Facilities Issues

A more recent scenic intrusion are alternative energy facilities including solar array fields, windmills (though not likely to be built in the Township due to topography), and methane digesters. Solar arrays can have scenic intrusion (and safety) issues related to glare and reflection if not appropriately sited and mounted with consideration given to neighboring properties and uses. However, solar arrays can be compatible with ‘modern rural’ farm character as they are a means for farmers to earn income off their land while continuing to engage in farming, and hence maintaining scenic open lands and possible historic farmstead resources. Windmills can create concerns of height, noise, location, structure, and type (atop building/new or retrofitting vs freestanding). Methane digesters, which are growing in use in rural areas, can be of significant scenic intrusion in an otherwise rural landscape as they have an appearance of a large industrial tank. Geothermal systems appear to have little difference from common groundwater wells and so are not considered as a scenic intrusion. Due to their nature and scenic impacts involved, alternative facilities installation needs to be examined on a case-by-case basis in terms of their scenic impact with regard to appropriate siting, neighboring uses, and scenic resources impacted.

Outdoor Advertising and Signage

Outdoor advertising is an unavoidable factor in society today. Signage in a visible and usable form is a necessity and, when designed appropriately, can complement the character of an area. Driving along Route 1 or Route 52, outdoor advertising and other signage detract from the scenic nature of the corridor and intrude upon Township scenic quality. While billboards offer an opportunity for off-site advertisement, the scenic cost can be high when there are too many and too large of size signs close together, when they block a scenic view, or when they are located along inappropriate roads. Billboards can make travelers feel as if a road is serving a higher functional classification than it actually is, as billboards are reminders of highways such as the PA Turnpike and other major interstates. For these reasons, it is important to consider how to limit negative impacts of outdoor advertising. Advertising that is too close together, distracting to drivers, or negatively impacts or completely blocks a key scenic resource should be avoided.

PA MPC permits municipalities to regulate signage, including size, location, and lighting, and doing so provides municipalities a greater level of control over the impact of advertising. It is important to periodically review and maintain outdoor advertising and other signage regulations as a part of Township zoning and SLDO to help prevent the overuse of signs of all types, ensure advertising is safely and appropriately sited, promote good design standards, and avoid as possible negative impacts on important resources. The Township regulates signage, including billboards or off-premises signs, through zoning. PennDOT, through the U.S Highway Beautification Act (1965) state implementation PA Outdoor Advertising Control Act 160 (1971), controls signage on national interstates and certain federally aided priority highways. For other roads, sign regulations are controlled locally. Through local regulation, design guidelines, and discussions early in the land development stage, municipalities have a degree of control as to where and what types of signs are most appropriate and have the least scenic interference.

PennDOT sets standards which municipalities may take into consideration. In short, these standards are based on type of: highway, landscape (rural or urban/suburban), zoning or land use, size, and spacing. For instance, off-premises signs are limited to commercial or industrial areas only (and are not located in residential or agricultural areas nor in designated state scenic byways), though no commercial advertising is allowed to protrude from any direction into a road right-of-way, nor directly disturb natural features. In addition, safety standards apply to all signs, and dictate that no sign may be placed in such a way that prevents a driver from having a clear and unobstructed view of official signs or approaching or merging traffic; no sign lighting may be pointed toward drivers or reflect in such a way as to impair the drivers vision; no sign may interfere with traffic signals or signs, and no sign may have flashing and blinking lights that would distract drivers.

In addition to addressing signage itself, municipalities can help preserve the scenic view of the night sky via provisions addressing sign lighting be directed at the sign itself and be extinguished at a reasonable hour, as further discussed below.

Light Pollution

Light pollution is defined by the International Dark-Sky Association as “any adverse effect of artificial light including sky glow, glare, light trespass, light clutter, decreased visibility at night, and energy waste”. Light pollution is created by stray outdoor lighting creating a halo of glow and brightness that blocks visibility of the night sky and its features otherwise viewable under more natural conditions. Stray outdoor lighting may result directly from improperly angled lighting fixtures or bare lamps, or indirectly from reflected light off surfaces such as pavement, building facades, or vehicles. It is most visible during periods of elevated air pollution and periods of high humidity. Light pollution from developed areas in the larger region (e.g. King of Prussia) and more locally (e.g. Exton and the Route 202 Corridor) contribute in turning the natural darkness of night into a halo of brightness of sufficient magnitude to outshine all but the brightest stars. As an interesting comparison, the full moon in the night sky averages an illuminance range between 0.01 and 0.02 footcandles, a light condition under which a person can read newspaper headlines, while it not uncommon for lighting under a gas station canopy to be 2,000 times greater. Light pollution is an issue overall in Chester County and the larger region, which can be addressed in an incremental manner locally, one development and land use at a time.

Light pollution is not just a concern because of the impact on resident’s view of stars and other features of the night sky, or because of the nuisance one neighbor’s improperly directed security floodlights can inflict upon another. Rather, the impacts can be grouped into broader and more encompassing categories of:

- **Human health** is impacted through disruption of circadian rhythms, impacts that are significant enough for the American Medical Association to adopt a resolution in 2009 to support reduction of light pollution.
- **Safety** can be compromised by ‘disabling glare’ (e.g. when excessive lighting affects a drivers road visibility), and by lighting perceived to increase safety. Even though a greater amount of light, which can translate into excessive lighting, is commonly equated to having ‘better security’. Studies, including a 1997 National Institute of Justice study, have shown no conclusive correlation between nighttime lighting and crime.
- **Energy** is wasted, which translates to wasted money and resources as each wasted photon of light was created by a power plant that in turn produced its own pollution while burning coal or oil to create energy.
- **Wildlife** may be the most affected as nocturnal animals become confused and disoriented. Certain nocturnal species have experienced a decline in reproduction, difficulty foraging for food, increased exposure to predators, and increased mortality due to impairment of their night vision.
- **Plant life** is affected as excessive and all-night lighting creates adverse conditions for plant health.

As is the case with other forms of pollution, there are point (direct) sources and non-point (indirect) sources causing sky-glow. Commonly found ones include:

- **Fixtures** that throw light upward toward the night sky rather than aimed at the intended feature (e.g. much billboard lighting);
- **Fixtures** with no directional covering that throw light and glare in all directions and not to the ground where it is needed (e.g. street lanterns mimicking historic gaslights that often contain light sources 25 to 50 times greater than a actual gas mantle);
- **Floodlights** (e.g. ‘barn lights’ on residential homes and garages) that throw light in several directions including into the night sky and may remain on throughout the entire night for reasons of attempted and perceived increase in security;
- **Parking lot lighting** (e.g. in shopping centers or automobile dealerships) and athletic-field lighting that emit day-time light levels and direct light both downward and upward.

Striving to use an appropriate amount of light (including level of luminosity and time period) that is properly directed for the task is the most efficient way to address and resolve the issue of light pollution. Reversing the national current trend of ‘the-more-light-the-better’ requires additional citizen education and possible municipal legislation. Educational materials and guidance for reducing light pollution within residential neighborhoods is available from the International Dark-Sky Association (www.darksky.org).

The PA Outdoor Lighting Council (www.polcouncil.org) can provide updated model ordinances and make educational presentations to municipal or other groups. Township zoning includes light regulations that balance safety and dark-sky protection. For example, these local regulations help prevent glare and light pollution by requiring the use of reasonable lighting levels, luminaries that do not emit glare/light above the horizontal, and automatic extinguishing of lighting when not needed. A purpose of lighting requirements under current Township zoning is to provide outdoor lighting in a manner that retains the rural, natural, and scenic character.

Resource Standards Summary

Current resource protection standards and the ordinance in which they are located are summarized in Table 6-1. Information regarding current protection measures helps to identify potential gaps in their protection so that recommendations can be made for improving Township regulations.

Table 6-1: Kennett Township Scenic Resources Protection Standards Summary Chart

SCENIC RESOURCE	CURRENT STANDARDS
SCENIC VIEWS (ZONING)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-family building design and siting is to preserve scenic views. ZO §240-1928 <input type="checkbox"/> Open Space Design Option development is to maximize conservation of scenic views and stormwater facilities are to have scenic quality. ZO §240-1705 <input type="checkbox"/> Woodland protection/disturbance is to consider protection of scenic views. ZO §240-1801 <input type="checkbox"/> Single-family Flexible Development in R-4 is to consider scenic views/landscape. ZO §240-702
HERITAGE & SPECIMEN TREES (ZONING & SLDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Removal only permitted to eliminate a hazard. Retained heritage and specimen tree credited towards tree replacement requirements. ZO §240-1802 & SLDO §206-517 <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Plans are to delineate locations of heritage and specimen trees. SLDO §206-403 <input type="checkbox"/> List identifies select Heritage Trees. ZO Appendix B
VISUALLY SIGNIFICANT RESOURCES MAP (ZONING & SLDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Depicts scenic vistas, roads, and landscapes as of 2002. ZO & SLDO Appendix

* SLDO – Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance; SWM – Stormwater Management; ZO – Zoning Ordinance

Recommendations

Identified visually significant resources from the 2002 Analysis have been considered so their value can be factored into overall resource prioritization and options for their protection can be considered. Visually significant resources are only one of many natural and cultural resources that Kennett Township possesses and has identified as important to protect. Scenic resources generally overlap a suite of these other resources, especially in the Township woodlands, stream valleys, farmsteads, farmlands, hedgerows, and historic structures. PA MPC calls for zoning to protect scenic values (§604.1). Scenic resources can be protected by themselves or can be included as part of a resources ‘protection package’ that includes other resources as well. For example, a scenic road corridor could also help protect historic and heritage tree resources. Without additional proactive measures and planning, however, it can be expected that the Township’s scenic resources will continue to erode and disappear.

Existing Scenic Resources

General

6-1 Update the 2002 Visually Significant Resources Analysis.

The 2002 Analysis is over a decade old at this point and much development change has occurred in the Township since that time. When updating the Analysis, the Township should take a holistic

look at the Township including desired growth and conservation areas, individual scenic elements, and overall scenic landscapes. Using the definitions of the various scenic resources types in the 2002 Analysis plus information in this Comprehensive Plan, the 14 vistas, 16 roads, landscapes, and historic and other scenic features from the 2002 Analysis should be reevaluated to determine if they remain scenic. Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway, proposed Red Clay Creek Scenic Byway, and Harriet Tubman Trail to Freedom should be included and mapped in an Analysis update. A more complete inventory of heritage trees should be pursued as part of this update.

Identified roads in the 2002 Analysis should be reevaluated for their scenic attributes, taking into account whether the road:

- Passes through or has views of natural, historic, or cultural landscapes that are significant to the Township character (e.g. wind through steeply sloped roadside banks, go through woodlands, pass by creek valleys, provide views of pastures, rolling meadows or historic buildings, or travel through historic villages or farmstead areas)?
- Affords vista points, or contains visual accents? (e.g. markers noting historic events)
- Allows a varied travel experience between open vistas and sheltered spaces? (e.g. traveling through the shelter of tree canopy into open pasturelands)
- Winds slowly and harmoniously through the landscape? (e.g. narrow roads that naturally calm traffic and follow natural contours and topography)
- or on the contrary contains notable visual intrusions or feels disjointed from its surroundings? (e.g. notably straightened or widened roads or bridges)

6-2 Encourage educational and outreach initiatives for residents and businesses to better understand the importance of scenic resources as significantly contributing to maintaining Township character and quality of life.

Basic education efforts via the Township newsletter, website, or hand-outs, for example, can have an important role in eliciting greater participation, understanding, and support for scenic resources protection and could be a regular, permanent feature of the Township.

6-3 Encourage landowner actions to protect and promote scenic resources.

This can be achieved through scenic or conservation easements in coordination with TLC and other land trusts. Landowners can improve the scenic value of their properties by landscaping with native plants or restoring some lands to meadows or woodlots. As part of the effort to nullify negative effects of suburbanization, lawns should be especially singled out as one form of non-native and ‘non-scenic’ landscaping that the Township may be able to exert some influence over. Lawns may be appropriate for areas immediately around houses, other buildings, and on small lots, but in a rural setting, common open spaces, and larger commercial and industrial properties, lawns can be replaced by native plant-dominated meadows or woodlands.

6-4 Continue to guide growth and development to areas less likely to impact roads, features, views, and landscapes identified as significant scenic resources.

6-5 Use the following steps to recognize scenic resources and their value when updating Township ordinances:

1. Acknowledge the importance of scenic resources in the purpose statements of ordinances.
2. Maintain a current listing and mapping of scenic resources.
3. Require in ordinances that any proposed subdivision, land development, or permit action in the vicinity of a recognized scenic resource coordinate early and throughout project development with the Township to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate negative scenic impacts.

Scenic Features and Views

6-6 Implement the recommendations for natural resources (Chapter 4), open spaces (Chapter 11), and historic resources (Chapter 5) as another means of protecting the scenic quality of the Township.

Continue to protect natural resources and preserve open space, which are both often inherently also scenic in nature. Strive to preserve the integrity and character of man-made scenic features that make them ‘scenic’ and consult strategies, e.g. those for historic resource protection.

6-7 Use existing regulatory tools to protect feature landscapes through zoning and the open space design option, and through SLDO requirements for existing site features and landscaping plans.

Scenic features identified on the Township Visually Significant Resources map can be protected from site alterations or visually intrusive encroachments through the Open Space Design Option, when it is proposed. Houses and infrastructure of a new development can be sited out of the viewshed through area and bulk regulation flexibility, and these resources then can be permanently protected through significant open space set-asides and accompanying easements. This may require some balancing of competing resources, however. For example, protecting the open view of a fallow field may mean accepting limited woodland removal elsewhere to accommodate buildings and other development improvements. Scenic resources can be protected during the land development process. Landscaped screenings can mitigate, to some extent, scenic features when it is not feasible to locate new structures away from a scenic area. Landscaping plans could require primarily use of native plants, reforestation along streams, and planting meadows.

6-8 Consider further recognizing scenic aspects of resource features in zoning and SLDO language.

Current Township zoning recognizes and includes standards for protecting stream corridors, steep slopes, floodplains, woodlands, wetlands, hedgerows, specimen vegetation, and heritage trees. As well, it recognizes among other elements the scenic and historic importance related to heritage trees. The Township could consider exploring the possibility of also recognizing the scenic aspects of the other above listed natural resources as well as other potential scenic resources in Township provisions.

The 2002 Analysis identifies basic scenic and non-scenic items. Scenic resources protection can be achieved to some degree by protecting individual scenic elements; however, relationships between those elements are important in creating overall scenic quality. Specific development design criteria, e.g. open space set asides, structure siting, setbacks, and lot sizes, need to be crafted and enforced to take into account preserving the Township’s remaining scenic resources.

6-9 Coordinate inventoried scenic features with areas well suited for open space preservation, and include these as resources to be preserved through the Township open space protection program.

6-10 Consider identified scenic views and how they can be protected during ordinance updates and land development review.

Though the Township may not be able to preserve the entire scenic viewshed (immediate and distant), attempts can be made to ensure the vista is not visually obstructed in the foreground and immediate area, and to preserve contiguous land areas in the viewshed and its key elements.

Scenic Roads

6-11 Explore implementing scenic road regulations.

The Township can consider a scenic corridor approach as parallel to an open space or greenway network approach, with the scenic corridor being more focused on the built-environment (e.g. historic resources and the road features) than natural resources. Scenic roads could be subjected to more explicit or detail review during subdivision and land development, particularly when use of the Township's Open Space Design Option is being proposed. Use of road frontage and points of ingress/egress can be better addressed through the added flexibility of this design option, and, if necessary, through the imposition of appropriate development conditions.

When planning for scenic roads, balance maintaining important elements of scenic road quality and providing appropriate levels of traffic volume and acceptable measures of safety, as in some cases the very elements that make a road scenic also are those that can detract from its safety.

A Scenic Overlay District from South Coventry Township zoning requires submission of landscape plans that are compatible “with existing surrounding landscape features,” that replicate “characteristic landscape features,” and that are comprised “primarily of native plant material.” Moreover, permitted structures are to be sited “such that the first floor elevation is at least thirty (30) feet below the ground elevation at the nearest point on any adjacent ridge line or high ground, whether on or off site.”

Tinicum Township, Bucks County, had adopted a stand-alone Scenic Roads Ordinance that allowed township roads to fall under special regulatory and maintenance provisions if a majority of landowners on either side of the scenic road portion agree to the Board of Supervisor's adopting such a road designation. For example, this could apply to changes proposed to designated scenic roads including paving dirt roads, straightening of curves, cutting and filling of grades, widening, and taking down or otherwise destroying mature trees or stone walls.

Tinicum Township superseded their scenic roads ordinance with scenic resource overlay district areas. These are corridors that follow public roads and offer access to prominent scenic vistas and to varying characteristic forms of scenic landscapes. They are identified on an adopted map. Within the overlay proposed development is by conditional use and restrictions on building heights and road widenings, realignments, and gradings have been adopted. Construction within the scenic corridor is to use “natural materials to blend with existing conditions,” development is to be “ameliorated through regrading and revegetation to restore the setting of the scenic corridor to its pre-existing condition,” and all development shall be “screened and buffered to minimize visibility of the same.”

Tinicum Township provided a basis for such regulations via their open space plan by designating scenic roads and their associated corridors as key resource focus areas. Kennett Township can provide a basis for such an ordinance by first updating the 2002 Analysis and then adopting the updated analysis as a Comprehensive Plan amendment to establish it as policy.

6-12 Encourage volunteers to participate in PennDOT's Highway Beautification Programs.

6-13 Consider additional projects similar to the ‘Garden Way’ project and support the Township EAC in pursuing similar road cleanup and beautification efforts.

Scenic Landscapes

6-14 Consider implementing Scenic Landscape regulations.

While the Township cannot preserve all scenic landscapes and viewsheds, it is important to identify and strive to preserve the most significant ones to retain the rural landscape and character of the Township. For example, scenic river landscape provisions can help preserve scenic views and features of the Red Clay Creek corridor. This approach applies to an area(s) adjacent to a scenic waterbody and includes specific regulations related to land use, setbacks, and impervious coverage, etc. It is one way the Township can encourage development that preserves the scenic views and attributes of riparian areas along the Creek. The width of the corridor varies according to topography and must be specified in the regulations.¹ Likewise, scenic road landscape provisions could be considered and, much like that for scenic rivers, these regulations can help preserve adjacent scenic views and features as well as the road itself. When a road passes through a scenic landscape, the visible roadside environment is key and that visual character depends on factors such as topography, land uses, setbacks, citing of development, tree cover, and historic ingredients. The intent of these regulations is to address these types of items to the extent feasible so they continue to complement and add to the scenic experience and overall rural character.

Intrusions to the Scenic Landscape

While existing scenic intrusions that are already in place may not be changeable in the near future, avoiding the creation of new scenic intrusions is a feasible goal and is the focus of the recommendations below. When those sites that have existing scenic intrusions are redeveloped in the future, discussion between the Township and property owner can take place for ways to minimize or mitigate the negative impacts of the intrusion.

General

6-15 Avoid and mitigate scenic intrusions to the extent possible early on in the development process.

Guidelines or regulatory language can be incorporated into Township administration procedure outlining the circumstances in which the Township would become involved. Avoiding an intrusion can be relatively simple, such as relocating an access point to a different part of a property or building outside of the viewshed of a scenic vista. Minimizing an intrusion is another option, such as developing a design that reduces the prominence of new development in the public scenic view. Further, mitigating an intrusion could entail a simple solution such as a well thought out landscaping plan that provides a buffer between a new structure and an existing scenic feature.

Incompatible Development

6-16 Consider provisions to expand ridgeline protection.

Regulating man-made intrusions above ridgelines could be considered as a scenic viewshed preservation tool. A proliferation of large houses or other structures situated along a wooded ridgeline can be highly detrimental to the scenic qualities of a rural area. The Township should consider expanding the ridgeline protection standards so they apply to other types of development. The mapping of protected ridgelines would also help in the administration of the ordinance provisions which could be applied as an overlay district. The regulation of man-made intrusions above ridgelines could be adopted as a scenic preservation tool. A proliferation of large houses or other structures situated along a wooded ridgeline can be highly detrimental to the

¹ See the Chester County Community Planning Handbook ('Toolbox'), Tool #25, Volume I, 1997 for additional information.

scenic qualities of a rural area. Zoning includes ridgeline standards, but they only apply to developments proposed under the Open Space Design Option. The Township could consider expanding ridgeline protection standards to apply to other types of development. Mapping protected ridgelines could also help in the administration of ordinance provisions and could be considered for an overlay district.

6-17 Consider extending scenic resources preservation provisions in zoning open space design option to other types of development.

The open space design option in zoning promotes proposed developments limit disturbance of significant natural and cultural resources and conserve scenic views. These types of standards could be more broadly applied to other parts of zoning and other types of development.

6-18 Consider extending scenic resources preservation provisions in SLDO woodlands disturbance regulations to other development situations.

Regulations limiting woodland disturbance during development consider the importance of balancing woodland preservation and tree replacement with other valuable resources on the site, including the protection of scenic views and the creation of a less visually intrusive layout.

6-19 Consider if parking standards could be enhanced to reduce any negative impact of parking facility design on scenic resources.

When updating ordinances or creating design guidelines, the Township could take into account the following minimum standards to mitigate the visual impact of parking facilities: the location, layout and type of parking in zoning; design considerations including access, topography, surface treatment, screening, buffering, and landscaping; and replacement provisions for damaged or sick landscaping plants or trees.

6-20 Consider developing ordinance language or guidelines to address some aspects of fence design and location.

For example, fence height in front yards, and setback requirements can be considered. In addition, requiring that fences be maintained is another consideration. Consideration could also be given to the potential impact of higher fences along the Route 52 Scenic Byway as these fences can block scenic views. Reference Byway Corridor Management Plan recommendations.

6-21 Enforce current property maintenance and building codes that already exist in the Township Code to address property maintenance issues as a scenic intrusion.

The Township Code outlines property maintenance requirements in the Township. The 2012 nuisance ordinance additionally assists in addressing this topic. Maintaining public health and safety are key concerns in undertaking enforcement of the already adopted provisions. Township property maintenance and weed control related ordinances should be reviewed for compatibility with landscaping with native plants.

6-22 Coordinate with PennDOT, Chester County, and other relevant entities on proposed transportation projects early on and throughout the project development process to ensure context sensitive designs. Be involved and provide input at the earliest stages of proposed road or bridge improvements.

Road and bridge construction, expansion, repairs, or improvements can yield significant impacts on local character, including scenic, natural, historic, or rural resources. The Township should try to be involved to the extent possible at the infancy stages of projects. In this way, a Township

representative and the local community can identify and convey key priority resources and transportation needs to achieve a successful project that balances transportation needs and protecting community resources. When replacement is being considered, a context sensitive design approach that takes into account the road or bridge surrounds should be implemented.

Utility Facilities

- 6-23 Coordinate early on in the land development process regarding design issues for utilities to help create an effective, efficient, and scenically compatible facility.**
- 6-24 Explore whether there are appropriate situations or areas where new utility lines should be placed underground, or consider promoting siting new overhead utility lines on only one side of the road.**

In the areas where it would be appropriate to require underground utilities, the Township could consider the following minimum standards to decrease the scenic impact from above ground utilities: promoting underground utility installation for new development via zoning; using flexible standards to encourage the idea while understanding the real limitations including cost for repair or maintenance; and making provisions for emergency or unusual circumstances to allow temporary overhead line installation until repairs can be completed.

- 6-25 Investigate additional control elements for wireless communication facilities and their scenic impact.**

The Township can consider ways in which to have cell or other communication tower design be as compatible with the scenic landscape as possible. For example, encouraging a tower to be disguised as a silo, tree, steeple, or flagpole could be considered. Antenna installed on top of existing structures, including building rooftops, water tanks, or existing towers, rather than the construction of new towers, is another consideration. Requiring a maintenance plan could also be considered as a way to help ensure some control over the tower and land surrounding it. Another option is to, in addition to zoning various sites for cell towers, encourage the use of appropriate public property for these facilities as many such properties may be in less intrusive locations than privately owned property, and the revenue to the local government can be significant. In addition, when a proposed cell tower could have a potential impact on identified resources, the Township's Historical Commission, EAC, etc could be involved for input and review of proposals.

Outdoor Advertising and Signage

- 6-26 Review sign provisions in village zoning districts to determine if they could be updated to help promote village character.**

In zoning, standards for signs in the villages are grouped with and the same as those for the SA Specialty Agricultural District. In V1 Hamorton Village and V2 Mendenhall Village districts, additional design standards, via ordinance or as advisory guide lines, could be considered to further address for example amount of information, legibility, color, materials, uniformity in design (versus individuality), specific lighting types, sign types, and support structure types to preserve village character. By creating guidelines for village areas that have a concentration of commercial and mixed uses, a locality can encourage a consistency in appearance that improves the overall scenic character of an area while permitting for flexibility and uniqueness.

6-27 Explore incorporating standards for the amount of information on signs so they are easier to read and are more visually understandable.

Limiting the amount of information included on business signs or off-site directional signs could provide greater effectiveness in conveying the intended key message.

6-28 Consider signage standards suggested by the PA Byway Program.

Light Pollution

6-29 Periodically review, and revise as needed, dark-sky oriented lighting standards in zoning to ensure they continue to provide the desired and up-to-date dark-sky friendly provisions.

6-30 Provide public awareness about light pollution and sky-glare for residents and businesses.

Information to raise awareness about the issue of light pollution, and how residents can help minimize the impact on an individual basis, can be included in the Township newsletter and website. In addition, The Township could consider hosting a stargazer's event at the Township Building grounds.