



STATE OF DELAWARE  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
800 BAY ROAD  
P.O. Box 778  
DOVER, DELAWARE 19903

CAROLANN WICKS, P.E.  
SECRETARY

August 27, 2008

Councilman Robert Weiner  
Louis J. Redding City County Building  
800 N. French Street Wilmington, DE 19801-3590

Dear Councilman Weiner;

During the fall of 2002, due to the construction of the Blue Ball Properties Project, it was necessary to relocate a historic mile marker which was along the west side of US Route 202, 0.7 miles north of Rockland Road and the Blue Ball Barn. The removal and relocation of this marker was required because of the reconfiguration of Route 202 and the new underpass being constructed at this site. More importantly, the care and the preservation of the mile marker fell under a 2001 Memorandum of Agreement established by the Federal Highway Administration for DelDOT to administer.

Since the marker needed to be removed by the first contractor for the Blue Ball Project and could not be replaced until completion of all the different construction contracts over 5 years, it was determined it would have to be stored offsite at a DelDOT facility. The marker was removed by the first contractor and relocated to the Canal District Maintenance Yard, off of Rte 7 in Bear, for storage. At last inspection, the marker was in storage at the yard, surrounded on three sides by concrete Jersey barriers for protection.

The maintenance yard is a 42-acre yard utilized for storage of surplus maintenance material, and not usually for items of historic significance. Among the items stored were large granite stones not utilized in other projects, which were earmarked for use as riprap.

The Area Supervisor who was in charge of the maintenance yard at the time of the marker's placement left his position, and unfortunately the replacement supervisor was never informed of the marker's historic value.

Since the Blue Ball project is fundamentally complete, the project was initiated a few weeks ago to have the marker relocated back to the general site and reset. A citizen has also been inquiring about the status of the relocation. When inspectors went to the maintenance yard, the marker could not be located. An investigation ensued and while no positive determination could be established, two years ago the yard became totally impacted with material and a general cleanup was required. It is believed that the marker was thought to be excess riprap and discarded.

The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) fully accepts the responsibility for the loss of this historic marker, and rest assured that every effort was made to locate it. The Blue Ball

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Project has accomplished so much for historic preservation, like the Blue Ball Barn, Weldin Ruins, and the Bird-Husbands House and we want to ensure this event does not tarnish this reputation by doing all that we can to minimize the loss of the marker. We have already begun the process of obtaining estimates for its replacement. Fortunately DelDOT has an extensive file on the marker, including photographs, description and diagrams so that a reproduction can be produced. Once the replacement has been made, DelDOT will partner with the Division of State Parks of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and the State Historic Preservation office (DE SHPO) for its appropriate placement.

Again, we deeply apologize for this loss and are committed to obtaining a suitable replacement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert King", written in a cursive style.

Robert King  
Community Relations Officer, PR