

RI Scenic Roadways Board Combined Annual Report FY2005 and FY2006

FY2005 (July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005)

In accordance with the Scenic Roadways Board Legislation, RIDOT will be responsible for supplying the staff support to the Scenic Roadways Board. The State Scenic Byway Coordinator, at RIDOT, is Ms. Barbara A. Petrarca.

During FY2005, the RI Scenic Roadways Board held only one (1) meeting on April 12, 2005. The meetings for (July 04-March 05 and May-June 05 were canceled). At the April 12, 2005 meeting, there was a lack of a quorum. The agenda for this meeting consisted of the following:

- 1) Review and Approval of the Intersection/Safety Improvements to Route 1, Charlestown Project.
- 2) Review and Approval of the Veterans Memorial Parkway (East Providence) Enhancement Project.
- 3) Review and Approval of the Crack Sealing Projects for Route 102, Exeter and Veterans Memorial Parkway, East Providence.
- 4) It was mentioned that a Public Hearing will be held on April 13, 2005 for the possible designation of Route 1 in South Kingstown.

On April 13, 2005, a Public Hearing was held in South Kingstown, for the Route 1 South Kingstown Designation Application (According to the Rules and Regulations of the Scenic Roadways Board, they must hold a Public Hearing in order to vote on a Submitted Roadway Designation). Because there was not a quorum at this Public Hearing, a vote on this Designation did not take place.

The Scenic Roadways Board gets funding through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Scenic Byway Grants. Each year, FHWA in Washington, asks for Grant Applications for Scenic Byway Work. In order to be eligible for any grant funding, a roadway must first be a State Designated Scenic Roadway. As of FY2005, RI has eight (8) Designated Scenic Roadways. There are very specific categories for Byway Grants. The Scenic Roadways Board has received their grant funding through the RI Department of Transportation. In FY2005, the Scenic Roadways Board had two (2) Consultants who were working on Grants. Each Consultant, their specific grant they worked on, and the amount of funds they received in this fiscal year are as follows:

Taintor & Associates, Inc.

22 Unicorn Street
Newburyport, MA 01950-5598

- 1996 Grant for Corridor Management Plans Route 102 in Exeter, Route 123 in Lincoln and Paradise Avenue and Associated Loop Roads: Amount in FY2005 = \$2,838.77
- 2002 Grant for Corridor Management Plan for Route 114 in Bristol: Amount FY2005 = \$6,932.82
- 1997 Grant for the Development of Educational and Outreach Program: Amount FY2005 = \$37,177.98

Bradford Associates
25 Creighton Street
Providence, RI 02906

- 1995 Grant for the Development of Scenic Highway Materials and Signs and Technical Support to the Scenic Roadways Board: Amount FY2005 = \$9,303.94
- 2000 Grant for the Design of Interpretive Sites for three (3) Scenic Roadways: Amount FY2005 = \$1,001.97

During FY 2005, two (2) other Scenic Roadway Applications were submitted for Review. They are: Routes 1 and 4 in North Kingstown and Route 116, Danielson Pike, Route 102, Route 14, Route 12 and Route 115 (Submitted as a Scenic Loop) all in Scituate. Due to a lack of a quorum, the Scenic Roadways Board did not take any action on these two (2) applications.

Staff continued to work on reviewing various Physical Alteration Permit Applications, Land Leases, and Tree Trimming Requests on the State's eight (8) Designated Scenic Roadways. (All this type of work can be done by Staff in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Scenic Roadways Board)

In FY2005, no Members were appointed to the Scenic Roadways Board as a result of the Separation of Powers Legislation.

FY2006 (July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006)

During FY2006, the RI Scenic Roadways Board did not hold any meetings because there have been no Board Members appointed, as a result of the Separation of Powers Legislation. The cancellations of monthly meetings were posted on the Secretary of State's Website.

Staff continued to work on reviewing various Physical Alteration Permit Applications, Land Leases and Tree Trimming Requests on the State's eight (8) Designated Scenic Roadways.

Staff also supervised the two (2) Consultants on their work for the Scenic Byway Grants. The following are each Consultant, their specific grant they worked on, and the amount of funds they received in this fiscal year:

Taintor & Associates, Inc.

- 2002 Grant for Corridor Management Plan for Route 114 in Bristol: Amount FY2006 = \$692.09
- 1997 Grant for the Development of Educational and Outreach Program: Amount FY2006 = \$9,919.03

Bradford Associates

- This Consultant did not invoice in this Fiscal Year.

The three (3) Pending Scenic Roadway Applications are still on hold until a new Scenic Roadways Board is appointed.

In FY2006, no Members were appointed to the Scenic Roadways Board as a result of the Separation of Powers Legislation.

End of FY2005 and FY2006 Combined Report

Attachment: List of the Eight (8) Rhode Island Designated Scenic Highways

Rhode Island Designated Scenic Highways

Shannock Road (January 24, 1991)

Shannock Road stretches approximately 1.7 miles from Route 112 to Route 2 through the Town of Charlestown and Richmond. The roadway winds through a unique area of rolling terrain through a variety of different landscapes including marshes, woodlands, and farm field bounded by stone walls.

Midway along the road is the historic Shannock Village. Shannock Village is historically significant as a small, but well-preserved, mid-nineteenth century rural textile mill village. Throughout the nineteenth century, small mills were constructed on waterways of Southern Rhode Island and around the mills grew villages to house the mill workers. Shannock Village is representative of this development pattern. In 1983, the village was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Ministerial Road (September 3, 1991)

Ministerial Road (Route 110) stretches approximately 6 miles from route 1 to Route 138 in South Kingstown. The roadway passes through dense stands of upland forest well known for the extensive areas of mountain laurel and rhododendron, which grow underneath the upland forest canopy. The road passes through a rolling landscape characterized by glacial kettleholes and moraines, several small brooks, wetlands and Larkin Pond. Along much of the road, stone walls underscore the fact that this area was once largely farmland and pasture.

Veterans Memorial Parkway (November 14, 1991)

Veterans Memorial Parkway, stretching 2.4 miles from Second Street to Route 103 in East Providence along the Providence River, affords impressive vistas of the downtown Providence skyline. The Parkway, which is lined with mature maple, oak, black pine and sycamore trees, winds its way past the locally notable landmarks of Squantum Woods, Watchemoket Cove and Fort Hill Overlook. Although entirely within urban area, the Parkway has pastoral charm with the nearby urban landscape masked by the adjacent heavily wooded areas of both public and private land.

Constructed between 1910 and 1920, the Veterans Memorial Parkway is an example of the Parkway movement in the early twentieth century. It is significant for its association with the Greater Metropolitan Park Plan for Providence and for its design by the nationally prominent Olmstead firm. The Parkway has been recommended as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Paradise Avenue and Associated Roads (May 13, 1993)

Paradise Avenue, Berkeley Avenue, Wyatt Road, Mitchell's Lane, Wapping Road, Peckham Avenue, Indian Avenue and Hanging Rock Road in Middletown comprise the 8.3 mile scenic highway network, which was designated in Middletown. This network of roads leads to the entrance of Sachuest Point on the Sakonnet River's entrance to the Atlantic Ocean. Contained within the boundaries of the Scenic network are many locally significant historic features, both manmade and natural, as well as some of national interest. The distinctiveness of the visual impressions received from the landscape are unique for the network due to the bordering trees of exceptional quality in terms of ages of specimen or spread and related flora as it applies to the four (4) seasons of the year. The trees frame part of the upland vistas that parallel this roadway for the traveler. The trees also contribute substantially to the rural or aesthetic character of the network as one sees grazing sheep and horses on the hillside. As the roadway gently slopes seaward the higher upland area's that are made up of Paradise Rock and Hanging Rock line which parallel this road, extend to form a visually superb and unique enclave. In the 18th century,

Dean George Berkeley a philosopher made frequent visits by carriage to Paradise and Hanging Rocks while living in Middletown and was said to have written 'Alciphron', one of his best known works. Today, Paradise Rock, a fine blue gray hued stone is being quarried by the Peckham Family and has been since 1844. It is one of the oldest operating quarries in the United States. The vividness of these landscape increases as it spatial enclosure becomes more dens due to the summer growth of the trees and roadside vegetation, but when travelers leave this area of the road, one observes the Atlantic Ocean and Sachuest Bay with the sparkling whitecaps, and fresh and salt water wetland with its tall marsh grasses. The diversity of visual events for travelling this rural network with its historic homes, school and farms, to the rugged slopes capped by several natural features of Purgatory Chasm, hanging rock and the cliffs of Sachuest Bay, are noteworthy.

Other natural sites of interest in the network are the Norman Bird Sanctuary and the Gray Craig Conservation Area which together comprise over 450 acres of open space.

The entire area is filled with historic homes of all types of architectural styles from Victorian to Greek Revival and to colonial as well as other 18th Century structures. These homes are all marked with plaques and identified in a book published by the Middletown Historical Society called "Middletown R.I. Houses, History and Heritage".

Great Road/Breakneck Hill Road (June 17, 1993)

Breakneck Hill Road (Route 123) and Great Road in Lincoln stretch approximately 1.4 miles from route 146 in the West to Manchester Print Works Road in the east. Breakneck Hill Road is primarily known for the vistas which can be viewed from every curve and bend along its path across the Moshassuck River Valley to the vast open space and rolling farmlands which provide view of a towering sycamore amidst the open fields and fir trees planted atop rolling hills in the distance.

At the corner of Great Road and Beckneck Hill Road lies over 150 acres of farmland consisting of a farmland consisting of a horse farm and the Town owned Chase Farm which was purchased as open space. Great Road itself dates back to 1683 as one of the earliest colonial roads. Portions of Great Road are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Great Road Historic District. The Town owns two (2) of the historic buildings along the road and is considering a Historical District Zoning ordinance to protect the integrity of private historical properties within the Historic District.

Route 102 (September 9, 1993)

Route 102, or Ten Rod Road, encompasses a 7.3 mile length between Route 2 in the east and Route 3 in the west in Exeter. Commonly known as "Exeter's Main Street", it was once used to carry goods and livestock to the market in Wickford, a village to the east. The roadway traverses Exeter's rolling topography, with elongated hills that run north to south, separated by narrow valleys. These hills range in height from 290 to 560 feet above sea level. Most of the highway follows the 18th century Ten Rod Road and is still bounded by significant sections of the original stone walls. The landscape of woodland pastures is unspoiled by commercial development. Located along the highway are twelve (12) historic structures, two (2) historic districts, and two (2) historic sites according to the 1976 survey conducted by the R.I. Historic Preservation Commission. The highway crosses five (5) valleys containing the streams, which constitute the headwaters of the entire Queen's River watershed.

Remarkable degrees of contrast along the highway from hilltop panoramas to the more intimate views contained in the valleys below, from the consistent green of stands of pine to the seasonal varying green to scarlet of the red maple in the valleys and wetlands, and finally from the woodland forests at the west end of the highway to the agricultural open spaces at the east contribute to the vividness of this scenic roadway.

Route 114 (Hope Street and Ferry Road) and High Street (August 8, 2000)

Route 114 (Hope Street and Ferry Road) and High Street comprises a five (5) scenic mile highway network in Bristol. The limits of the scenic highways are from the Bristol/Warren townline to the Bristol/Portsmouth townline. The most telling attribute is the nearly unbroken “Allee” of mature trees, which line nearly the entire length. Also found on these roads is a rare example of a 17th century planned “Grid” community forming the focal point of the scenic highway. There also exists many historic homes and building, which date back to the 17th century. Many other historic sites exist along this route, such as Colt State Park and Blithewold Gardens and Arboretum. As one travels through the historic district, every side street culminates in a beautiful view of Bristol Harbor and Poppasquash Point.

This scenic highway is also home to the oldest Fourth of July Parade in the country since the 18th century.

Route 1, Charlestown (August 26, 2002)

Route 1, or Post Road, is a seven-mile road, which extends from the South Kingston town line south to the Westerly town line. Post Road has wonderful views that create an unusually attractive and integrated traveling experience for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The road possesses outstanding natural, historical, and cultural characteristics, significant recreational opportunities, and other significant visual characteristics.

There are important natural resources along Post Road that, for the most part, have been well preserved. On the northerly side, being the edge of the glacial Charlestown Moraine, there is thick and beautiful foliage consisting of a variety of species of trees. The median strip, which is very wide for over half of the road, has attractive plantings which block the view of oncoming traffic in many areas. On the southerly side, where the glacial flat outwash plain begins, the views contrast with those to the north. The vegetation is lower and ponds and occasional coastal ocean views are visible. The variety of the natural landforms and vistas most certainly create an especially attractive and appealing driving experience.

In addition to the scenic natural beauty, there are interesting historical and cultural resources along the road dating back as far as the 17th century. These include the 1667 Stanton Inn, the Wilcox Tavern, the Joseph Stanton House and monument, and a red saltbox near the Wilcox Tavern. In driving over Post Road, one also passes many exit signs identifying historic sites nearby, many of which are on the National Register of Historic Places.

Cultural activities of interest are the summer season’s Seafood Festival and Swamp Yankee Days, rustic shopping at the Route 2 intersection, specialty shops in historic Cross Mills and events at Ninigret Park.

Post Road offers many exciting recreational opportunities. It is close to Charlestown’s beaches, salt ponds, the Charlestown Breachway to the Atlantic Ocean, and Burlingame State Park. A great deal of swimming, relaxation, and pleasure on beaches, boating, fishing, and camping all take place close to Post Road.