

# KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN



Prepared by the East Pikeland Township Historical Commission  
with input from Pikeland Historical Society and Kimberton Village Business Association.  
March 2012

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## ***I. Executive Summary***

Heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry. The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines Cultural Heritage Tourism as **“traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources”** (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2008). The Township of East Pikeland is a place rich in the elements of a cultural and heritage tourist destination. Heritage tourism has been shown to be an effective tool in the development and diversification of local economies aiming to foster strong economic growth while protecting a valuable, but vulnerable, cultural heritage. Many local government agencies, preservation groups, and economic development advocates have a very positive view of heritage tourism, since it can be a powerful engine of economic growth while helping improve the quality of life for local communities.

After receiving a grant in January 2011 from The Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area in collaboration with the William Penn Foundation, the East Pikeland Township Historical Commission partnered with the Pikeland Historical Commission and the Kimberton Village Business Association to create this Heritage Action Plan (HAP).

Creating the HAP was a twelve-month process involving an analysis of East Pikeland’s Cultural Heritage Tourism attractions, the development of resource themes that persuasively captures the appeal of the Township in a cultural heritage tourism experience, creation of our Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Goals and Objectives, identification of our key short-, medium- and long-term Heritage Projects, an assessment of our marketing and outreach plans, and how we are to manage and improve our most important historic resources going forward. This Plan will enable the Township and its stakeholders to leverage the existing and proposed cultural heritage tourism attractions and venues for the greatest economic return, without negatively impacting the quality of life expected by our residents.

The primary purpose of the HAP is to maximize the return to the Township on its cultural heritage assets. This includes income generated for the Township businesses, as well as increases in tax revenues and the tax base for the Township. This is accomplished primarily through increased visitation to the Township’s cultural heritage attractions, both by visitors as well as local residents. Other benefits include increased preservation education, and increased awareness of the importance of saving local historic resources. The strategy seeks to accomplish this by strengthening the **connections** between East Pikeland’s cultural heritage assets to provide a more compelling visitor experience, and by increasing the visibility of these assets to the target market segments identified in the Market and Outreach Section.

The core idea of the strategy involves using the diversity of offerings the Township either has already, or could develop, to assemble various offering “packages” to appeal to several

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major cultural heritage tourism themes: Revolutionary War, Agricultural/Industrial Revolution, Transportation, Churches and Graveyards, Education/Women's Education, and Natural Resources.

The essence of East Pikeland's HAP is to package and promote the assets the Township already has, while incorporating other assets into promotions as they are completed (e.g., the French Creek Trail, the Continental Powder Works Heritage Park, "Walkable Kimberton", etc.). This will require a sustained multi-year effort to launch the strategy, and then to configure the infrastructure required to sustain it. It is our recommendation that the strategy be funded largely through grants (federal, state, and local) and general fundraising. Minimal funding from the Township is expected.

In summary, there are many opportunities to expand heritage tourism in East Pikeland Township and the economic benefits can be substantial, but it will require a commitment on the part of both public and private entities to make this happen. By viewing this Heritage Action Plan as a starting point, with the ongoing need to modify and adapt its content, East Pikeland can be a local leader in heritage tourism for many years to come, and reap the significant economic and quality of life benefits this will bring to East Pikeland and its citizens.

## ***II. East Pikeland Township Background***



*Rapps Dam Covered Bridge*

East Pikeland Township is situated at the northern boundary of Chester County along the Schuylkill River that separates Chester County from Montgomery County to the north. Although only 35 miles northwest of Philadelphia and 37 miles northwest of Wilmington, Delaware, both major urban centers in the Mid-Atlantic Region, East Pikeland Township has been more immediately influenced by local urban centers such as Phoenixville and King of Prussia. Bordering East Pikeland Township are the Chester County Municipalities of Schuylkill Township, Charlestown Township, West Pikeland Township, West Vincent Township, East Vincent Township and the Boroughs of Phoenixville and Spring City. This entire area is characterized by the urban centers of Phoenixville and Spring City and by the suburban-rural nature of the remaining municipalities. The orientation of East Pikeland Township is essentially toward the Schuylkill River Valley. Although the river is no longer an important source of transportation, as had been its history, the major highway system parallels it.

In 2010 the U.S. Bureau of the Census reported a total population of 7,079 persons in East Pikeland Township. This represents an increase of 2695 persons, or 62%, since 1970. Approximately 81% of the Township's population resides in the French Creek basin, the middle area of the Township, or about one half the area of the Township. Because of its location relative to surrounding population centers and its rural and suburban character, East Pikeland Township and its growth in population has been heavily influenced by the outward migration from the Philadelphia area and by the location or relocation of employment opportunities in King of Prussia and the U.S. Route 202 and 422 corridors.

East Pikeland Township is a township of the second class operating under the Pennsylvania Second Class Township Code. The Board of Supervisors is the governing body, with three members elected at large by the voters for staggered six-year terms. They are responsible for both the legislative and executive functions of the township. The township manager is appointed by the board and is responsible for the day-to-day business activities. The manager coordinates the work of all operating departments (Administration, Police and Public Works) and is directly responsible to the Board of Supervisors.

A map of East Pikeland Township is attached in Appendix A.



### ***III. Historic Perspective***

In 1682, William Penn petitioned King Charles II to make payment in land for a debt owed by the Crown to his father, an Admiral in the British Navy. The land was called West New Jersey, which included the land west of the Delaware River that was to later become Pennsylvania. Penn was granted a royal charter appointing Penn and his heirs “true and absolute Proprietors of a tract of land, called Pennsylvania, lying north of Maryland, south of New York”. He saw the land west of the Delaware as an opportunity for his “Holy Experiment” – a Quaker colony first called the Society of Friends of West New Jersey, a realization of his ideal to enable Quaker households to practice their discipline of familial and spiritual communities in an agrarian society.



*Kimberton Inn in Kimberton Village c 1900*

Pike's Land was the first name given to a grant of 10,000 acres by William Penn to Joseph Pike from Cork, Ireland, in 1705. It was eventually sold by Pike's descendants and in 1838 was split in two parts, East Pikeland and West Pikeland.

The name of French Creek – also called the Vincent River on some records, is thought to have come from the interest of early pioneers in the area, many of whom were French. But it may also be an alliteration of “Friend’s Creek,” from its Quaker settlers. The Indian name for the creek, Sankanac, means “Flint River.”

East Pikeland was directly involved in the Revolutionary War, especially from 1776 through 1778, and most heavily during the "Philadelphia Campaign" in 1777 and 1778. It was a source of provisions for the Army from its farms, mills and cottage industries. Military importance came in 1776 with the authorization by the Committee of Safety in Philadelphia for the erection of the Continental Powder Mill, and the site chosen was the location we now know as Rapps Dam on French Creek. The mill was a key element in a system of munitions supply that involved the Warwick and Reading iron furnaces near the headwaters of French Creek, which together with other furnaces such as Hopewell produced cannon and

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ammunition for General Washington. The prime location of the mill on the creek with its long millrace was not forgotten after the war. Some of the mill buildings were reconstructed and over the next 150 years, continued to operate variously as oil, saw, grist and spoke mills.

The heart of the township is Kimberton Village, a quaint eighteenth century village located off Route 113. The Kimberton Village Historic District includes sixty-two buildings and two structures along three eighteenth and nineteenth century roadways that helped to make the village a local education, market, and transportation center. The village is also locally significant for its namesake, Emmor Kimber, an enterprising educator who arrived here in 1817 and promptly established himself as the community's leading citizen and a prominent county figure. Kimberton's architecture reflects the village's two phases of growth. At the district's western end, around an early crossroads (Kimberton and Hare's Hill Roads), stand eighteenth and early nineteenth century stone buildings that are representative of the eighteenth century vernacular architecture of this part of Chester County. The opposite end of the district reflects the development of building lots around the post-Civil War railroad station. The regular plan and siting of houses in this section of the district are distinctive in comparison to other historic villages in northern Chester County.



*A funeral procession passing by the Kimberton Inn.*

East Pikeland Township has seen considerable change since the early part of the twentieth century. The area around Kimberton saw expanded housing areas, as did the corridors near Routes 23 and 724. Only the main roads were paved, according to a 1938 map. The reason for the growth in the township over the years has been an influx of population that has found East Pikeland Township an attractive and practical place to live. The suburbanization of the township, as most areas, occurred as the availability of automobiles made the general population mobile. In 1940, the township population was 976. Space to house the ever-increasing population came from the conversion of lands that had traditionally been dairy or wheat farms. Although some farms remain today, the predominant land use pattern in the

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central portion of the township is residential. The spread of suburban development has occurred primarily in the French Creek Valley. Also occurring since World War II has been the development of townhouse complexes, shopping centers, and industrial sites, such as the Cromby Power Station (PECO) and shopping centers along Routes 113, 23 and 724. The closing of the remaining one and two room school houses occurred in the 1950's, in favor of the regional school system.

East Pikeland Township takes pride in its rich heritage. Kimberton Village is one of two villages in the township that are recognized on the National Register of Historic Places; the other being the Middle Pickering Historic District. Additionally, there are four other sites listed on the National Register.

In 2010 the federal government recognized East Pikeland Township as a Preserve America Community. Communities designated through the program receive national recognition for their accomplishments in preserving special places and telling the nation's story. The Preserve America program is a federal effort to encourage and support community efforts to preserve and enjoy America's priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past; strengthened regional identities and local pride; increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets; and support for the economic vitality of our communities.





#### ***IV. Heritage Action Plan***

The purpose of a Heritage Action Plan is to create a foundation document to explain how East Pikeland Township will become a heritage tourism destination. Heritage programs improve the local economy by using historic, cultural, natural and scenic resources to promote tourism and visitation. The purpose of a heritage program is to create sustainability through resource preservation and enhancement, incorporating preservation into the local economy, and increasing the interest in heritage efforts among the community.



*Howard Moses General Store, Kimberton Village (circa 1908)*

#### **WHO IS THE HERITAGE TOURISM TRAVELER?**

The heritage tourist seeks travel experiences that broaden and deepen his or her understanding of other places and people. The heritage tourist wants to experience destinations with a distinctive sense of place. In other words, “what makes a community special”?

Research by Louis Harris, Inc., Decima Research, the Travel Industry of America, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation tells us that today’s heritage tourist is:

- **Well educated** – Most heritage tourists have advanced degrees. Education level is the single most significant factor that influences cultural and heritage participation and travel.
- **Older** – Participation in cultural and heritage events peaks between ages 45 and 65, when people are at the height of their careers, earning power, and discretionary income.
- **Influenced by women** – Women typically plan family vacations and group trips, and also control more personal discretionary income.

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- **Cosmopolitan** – International travel is growing. Those travelers seeking heritage or cultural events are just as likely to travel to Europe, Asia, or Africa as within the U.S.
- **Accountability-driven** – Increasing access to global communication has made heritage travelers more discerning and better informed. They look for value for their dollar and experiences that will meet their expectations.
- **Generous in spending** – Visitors to historic and cultural sites spend about \$62 more per day than other visitors. They tend to spend money on antiques, art, gourmet food, wine, health food, and outdoor experiences such as biking, hiking, canoeing, and bird watching.
- **More inclined to stay overnight in hotels and bed and breakfasts.**
- **More inclined to stay longer than the average traveler.**
- **More likely to visit a diversity of sites, cities, and regions than the average traveler.**
- **Wants high quality services** – The tourist looks for quality in infrastructure and services, as well as in program content.
- **Interested in authenticity** – The heritage tourist seeks out experiences that are authentic in order to learn about a community's history and culture.
- **Wants easy-to-do, accessible quality travel experiences** – Due to time constraints, including less leisure time, the heritage tourist wants a unique and enriching travel experience that combines education, entertainment, and authenticity.

***Heritage Action Plan Vision Statement: To create a living, learning historic destination to aid in educating residents and tourists as to the contributions the Kimberton Area has made in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in the evolution of American heritage, defense, education, progressive thought and agriculture.***

**Mission Statement: Work with stakeholders, partners, and businesses to implement the Kimberton Area Heritage Action Plan to preserve valuable heritage resources and enhance tourism and economic development in the community.**

## **Goals and Objectives**

### **Goal 1: Increase economic development related to heritage tourism for the benefit of stakeholders, partners, and friends in the East Pikeland area.**

*Objective 1:* Improve East Pikeland's existing tourism economy through the implementation of the Heritage Action Plan and development of the heritage program.

*Objective 2:* Work with stakeholders, partners, and local businesses to promote heritage attractions through marketing and advertising.

*Objective 3:* Work with stakeholders, partners, and local businesses to develop useful heritage products.

*Objective 4:* Ensure appropriate communications and coordination by and between stakeholders, partners, and potential partners.

### **Goal 2: Promote Kimberton Area as a destination**

*Objective 1:* Work to create a mix of public and private resources to work together to make the Kimberton Area a successful heritage destination.

*Objective 2:* Consult with a heritage tourism professional to assist the township with our heritage efforts.

*Objective 3:* Meet with potential heritage partners for buy-in to Kimberton Area heritage program.

*Objective 4:* Apply for additional grant funding to further our heritage tourism marketing needs, create an annual work plan, and to create a five year Business Plan.

### **Goal 3: Educate public about historic significance of East Pikeland Township**

*Objective 1:* Enable visitors to have greater access to and understanding of East Pikeland's unique history and culture (historic walking tours, speaker's bureau, field trips).

*Objective 2:* Foster partnerships among and between heritage attractions, businesses, and local residents to encourage visitors to explore, linger, and sample the diverse offerings of the area.

*Objective 3:* Ensure that the heritage effort is adequately staffed with professionals/volunteers that can advance the mission and implement the Heritage Action Plan.

**Goal 4: Create a shared sense of community**

*Objective 1:* Foster partnership and continuous communication with other East Pikeland Township boards and committees (Historical, Open Space, Parks and Recreation, etc.)

*Objective 2:* Foster partnership and continuous communication with other municipalities around the region.

**Goal 5: Promote a sustainable, pedestrian friendly community**

*Objective 1:* Connect East Pikeland’s rural areas, heritage resources, and recreation and natural resources to the existing and planned systems in the township and surrounding townships (French Creek Trail, “Walkable Kimberton”, Schuylkill River Trail).

*Objective 2:* Promote a sustainable pedestrian and bicycle friendly community that easily moves people throughout the township while not promoting congestion that stresses local roadways.

*Objective 3:* Establish pedestrian and bicycle amenities around the Kimberton area such as crosswalks, bike racks, lights, and directional signs.

**Goal 6: Preserve and protect existing resources**

*Objective 1:* Work with stakeholders and partners to preserve and protect the township’s important heritage resources (development of Heritage Park, restoration of Snyder’s Mill, Kimberton Historic District).

*Objective 2:* Raise public awareness of East Pikeland’s unique heritage resources, while also promoting these resources (interpretive signage, historic walking tours).

*Objective 3:* Seek official recognition for important heritage resources by linking them to a broader heritage program (such as the National Register of Historic Places, Preserve America, and American Battlefield Protection Program).

## ***V. Heritage Resources by Theme***

East Pikeland Township's heritage resources can be categorized into several distinct themes: Revolutionary War, Agricultural/Industrial Revolution, Transportation, Churches and Graveyards, Education/Women's Education, and Natural Resources. Each of the Township's heritage resources have been evaluated within these themes, with particular attention paid to the resources physical condition, contribution to the overall Heritage Action Plan, and the impact of future Heritage Action Plan projects.

### **Revolutionary War**

In 1776, the Continental Congress authorized construction of a large mill race, gunpowder mill and gun factory on French Creek. When it was burned down by the British Army, the loss may have made necessary the placement of the Continental Army in Valley Forge, so that munitions production could continue unthreatened in the iron forges to the west. The site is not developed yet for tourist visits but has great potential for Revolutionary War tourism, being so close to Valley Forge National Historic Park and to the famous army hospital in Chester Springs.

### **Agricultural/Industrial Revolution**

After the Revolutionary War, Philadelphia became the leading exporter of flour barrels and bread kegs, primarily to the Caribbean Islands in exchange for much needed hard currency. Three mills were operating on the Royal Springs Creek that runs through Kimberton. The majestic Christman Mill building is beautifully intact in the center of Kimberton and now serves as the Kimberton Post Office. With the coming of railroads in the mid 1800's, local farming turned from wheat production to dairy, and the mills were transformed into feed mills for that then-profitable industry. Kimberton was again in the forefront of change when organic farmers and biodynamic farmers met here in the 1950's to establish standards for organic produce, and today the area thrives as a major center for alternative farming with several community supported agriculture farms in the area.

### **Transportation**

Three picturesque eighteenth century covered bridges and two iron truss bridges still stand within four miles of Kimberton. The Schuylkill Navigation System Canal, running parallel to the Schuylkill River in the northern part the township, made possible the beginning of the American Industrial Revolution by supplying coal from the mountains for almost 100 years. The canal was supplemented by the Reading Railroad of which Emmor Kimber was a founding member. The railroad also built "milk run" lines through Kimberton, allowing dairy farmers to market their milk to Philadelphia.



## **Churches and Graveyards**

Early settlers lie buried in two old Quaker graveyards in Kimberton and in several Lutheran, Reformed and Mennonite burial grounds nearby. Some of the early inscriptions are in German. The “Hicksite” Friends and the Mennonites were especially active in the “Underground Railroad” effort to illegally hide and help fugitives from slavery.

## **Education/ Women’s Education**

The Quaker educator Emmor Kimber ran the French Creek Boarding School for Girls from 1817 to 1850, and a large part of the main building remains intact in the center of Kimberton Village. The school became a model for a gently, loving approach to girl’s education and some students went on to become early scientists, abolition spokeswomen, and noted advocates for women’s rights. A local Quaker doctor, Bartholomew Fussel, was one of the founders of the Women’s Medical College in Philadelphia.

## **Natural Resources**

The village sits nestled in the French Creek Valley, surrounded by wooded hills and rich farmland. The older homes and barns constructed by Welsh and German stone masons have survived the centuries with very little loss by fire or development. Several Victorian brick town houses grace the center of Kimberton Village and twentieth century houses around the village create a pleasant density. Superb restaurants and an organic foods store draw people from all around. The Village has become known as a charming, yet vibrant Chester County town.

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Themes	Heritage resource	Location	Date	Condition	Contribution	Potential Projects
Revolutionary War	Continental Powder Works	Southeast side of French Creek	1776	Poor	Historical	Interpretive signage. Heritage Park
Revolutionary War	French Creek	French Creek	Acquired original property in 1988	Good	French Creek Trail	French Creek Trail
Revolutionary War	Snyder's Mill	Northwest side of Rapp's Dam Road	1828	Fair	Historical	Exhibit space for Heritage Park
Revolutionary War	Yellow Springs (not in East Pikeland Township)	Chester Springs	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Excellent	Historical	
Revolutionary War	Valley Forge National Historic Park (not in East Pikeland township)	Valley Forge	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Excellent	Historical	Partnership for marketing CPW Park
Revolutionary War	Valley Forge Army Hospital	Valley Forge	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Good	Historical	
Agricultural/Industrial Revolution	Kimberton Village	Kimberton, East Pikeland	1817	Good	Historical	Kimberton Streetscape project
Agricultural/Industrial Revolution	Chrisman's Mill	Southeast corner of Kimberton Road and Hare's Hill Road	1796	Excellent	Historical	Kimberton Streetscape project
Agricultural/Industrial Revolution	French Creek Boarding School for Girls	Corner of Kimberton Road and Hares Hill road	1818	Excellent	Historical	Kimberton Streetscape project
Agricultural/Industrial Revolution	Kimberton Inn	Northeast corner of the Kimberton road and Hares hill road intersection, this structure dates back to 1796.	1796	Excellent	Historical	Kimberton Streetscape project
Agricultural/ Industrial Revolution	Sign of the Bear Tavern	Intersection of Kimberton and Hares Hill Roads	1771	Excellent	Historical	Kimberton Streetscape project
Agricultural/Industrial Revolution	Prizer Mill Complex	Northwest of Hare's Hill Road and Southwest of Mill Lane on Royal Springs Creek	1837	Fair	Historical	Interpretive signage
Agricultural/Industrial Revolution	Seven Stars farm-CSA	East Vincent Township	1988	Excellent	CSA	Marketing partner
Agriculture/Industrial Revolution	Sankanac-CSA	Along French Creek in West Vincent Township		Excellent	CSA	Marketing partner

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Themes	Heritage resource	Location	Date	Condition	Contribution	Potential Projects
Agricultural/ Industrial Revolution	Charlestown- CSA	Charlestown Township	2000	Excellent	CSA	Marketing partner
Agricultural/ Industrial Revolution	Kimberton CSA	Kimberton	1887	Excellent	CSA	Marketing partner
Agricultural/ Industrial Revolution	Cromby Generating Plant	End of Township Line Road along Schuylkill River	1950's-2012	Good	Linked to trail	Trail partner
Agricultural/ Industrial Revolution	Kimberton Grange	Kimberton		Good	Historical	Kimberton Streetscape Project
Transportation	Schuylkill Navigational Channel	Schuylkill River	1816-1825	Poor	Historical	Future trail
Transportation	Rapps Dam Bridge	Rapp's Dam Road and French Creek	1866	Excellent	Linked to trail	French Creek Trail
Transportation	Hares Hill Bridge	Hares Hill Road and French Creek	1869	Excellent	Linked to trail	French Creek Trail
Transportation	Pickering Valley railroad	Chester Springs	1870	Poor	Future trail	Future trail
Transportation	Sow Belly railroad	Along French Creek	1790	Poor	Future trail	Future trail
Churches and Graveyards	Pikeland Friends Cemetery	Southeast side of Route 113 at Hare's Hill Road	1758	Excellent	Genealogical searches	Interpretive signage
Churches and Graveyards	Centennial Lutheran Church	Southwest corner of Hare's Hill Road and Cold Stream Road	1876	Excellent	Genealogical searches	Interpretive signage
Churches and Graveyards	Zion Lutheran Church	South of Route 724 at Bonnie Brae Road	1774	Excellent	Genealogical searches	Interpretive signage
Churches and Graveyards	St. Peter's German Reformed Church	Northeast side of Clover Mill Road on the southeastern slope of the hill	1770	Excellent	Genealogical searches	Interpretive signage
Churches and Graveyards	St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran church and graveyards	Northeast side of Clover Mill Road	1770	Excellent	Genealogical searches	Interpretive signage

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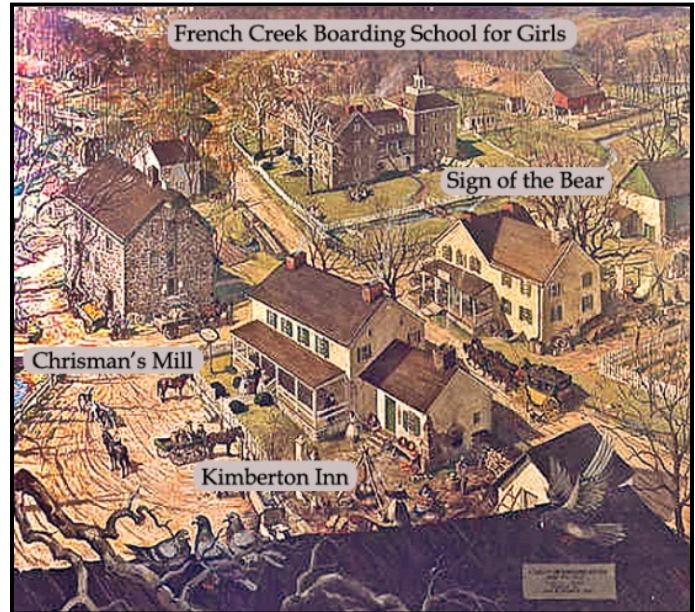
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<b>Themes</b>	<b>Heritage resource</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Contribution</b>	<b>Potential Projects</b>
Education/ Women's Education	East Pikeland Elementary School	Hares Hill & W. Seven Stars Roads	1928	Good	Historical	Interpretive signage
Education/ Women's education	Kimberton Waldorf School	W. Seven Stars Road	1941	Excellent		Interpretive signage
Education/ Women's education	St. Basil's	Kimberton Road	1967	Good		
Education/ Women's Education	Octagonal Schoolhouse	Chester Springs Road	18??		Historical	Interpretive signage
Natural Resources	Pickering Creek	Pickering Road		Excellent	Future trail	Future trail
Non-categorized Resources	Kimberton Park	Kimberton Road in Village	1998	Excellent	Parking area	
Non-categorized Resources	Kimberton Fairgrounds and Fair/ Fire Company	Kimberton	1929	Excellent	Linked to Village	
Non-categorized Resources	Underground Railroad	NA	NA		Historical	Interpretive signage
Non-categorized Resources	Historic Register Properties throughout township			Excellent	Historical	Interpretive signage
Non-categorized Resources	Valley Dell Subdivision		1940's	Excellent	Historical	Interpretive signage

## ***VI. Historic and Cultural Points of Interest***

### **Kimberton Village National Historic District**

Kimberton Village is a quaint eighteenth century village located off Route 113 in East Pikeland Township. The Kimberton Historic District includes sixty-two buildings and two structures along three eighteenth and nineteenth century roadways that helped to make the village a local education, market, and transportation center.



### **Significant Historical Structures located in Kimberton Village**

**Chrisman's Mill** is located on the southeast corner of Kimberton Road and Hare's Hill Road. The 2-1/2-story brownstone mill building is now used as the Kimberton Post Office. The grist mill was established about 1796, and acquired by Emmor Kimber in 1820. A tenant house on the site was used to house single men who worked for Kimber. The site also includes a large barn and a small shed. The mill was fed from a raceway that captured the water power of Royal Springs Creek.



Although a Quaker by faith, Emmor Kimber opened the **French Creek Boarding School for Girls** in 1818 to girls of all denominations, and orphans or students from distant parts were admitted at any time without previous application. It was located on the corner of Kimberton Road and Hares Hill Road in a two-story, Colonial-style building known as Kimber Hall. The once exclusively girls' school would later become available for boys as well. The curriculum evolved over the years to include reading, writing, English grammar, history,



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geography, arithmetic, delineation of maps, astronomy, botany, chemistry, and sewing. He also offered, for an extra five-dollar fee, courses in drawing, oil and watercolor painting, French, Greek, and Latin. In addition to all of those courses, students could also learn about mechanics tools, gardening, husbandry, etc. The school was located on the road from Norristown to Yellow Springs, 27 miles from Philadelphia. The children who traveled from Philadelphia to the school came by organized stage coach for a fare of a \$1.75 round trip. In addition to local students and the ones from Philadelphia, students also came from New York, Wilmington, Baltimore, and cities in adjacent states. The school operated until 1848.

**The Kimberton Inn** is located on the northeast corner of the Kimberton Road and Hares Hill Road intersection. This structure dates back to 1796. Over the years it has functioned as an inn, a tavern, and a restaurant. It has changed names throughout the years and has been known as the Kimberton Hotel (1800's), The Kimberton Inn and Country House (1950's - 1980's) and today, The Kimberton Inn.



**The Sign of the Bear Tavern** is also located at the intersection of Kimberton and Hares Hill Roads. The two-story stuccoed building was built around 1771 and functioned as a tavern and stagecoach stop. Emmor Kimber acquired the property and turned it into a store and post office. The site also includes a spring house and barn. The general merchandise store remained into the twentieth century.

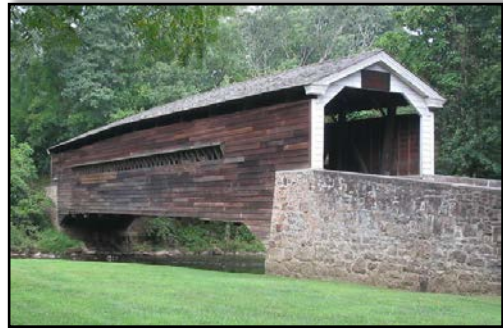


*Sign of the Bear. Then.... And Now*

## **Historic Bridges**

### ***Rapps Dam Covered Bridge***

The bridge was built by Benjamin F. Hartman in 1866, with a 'Double Burr-arch truss' design. The bridge is about 105 feet long and 14 feet wide, and is owned and maintained by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and inventoried on the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge is named after George A. Rapp and his sons who operated a saw mill and gristmill just south of the bridge starting in 1878. East and west of the bridge is the Continental Powder Works. Throughout the nineteenth century, this bridge and other covered bridges were vital to transportation and served local mills and the transportation of agriculture produce to market. Of the 85 covered bridges built in Chester County, the Rapps Dam Bridge is one of only 15 remaining.



### ***Hares Hill Road Bridge***

The Hares Hill Road Bridge is a single-span, tied arch, without overhead bracing, seated on masonry abutments. Its approaches are rammed fill contained by masonry wing walls. The bridge's unique wrought-iron superstructure is 103'4" in overall length with a clear span of 99'-8" measured between abutment faces at the seats.

The bridge was formerly called the Heistand's Ford Bridge after the surname of the contiguous landowner at the time of construction, David Heistand. Now it is known locally as the Silver Bridge, reflecting the color of the paint used to protect against corrosion and to enhance night visibility. It was built in 1869 and is the only known surviving example of Thomas W. H. Mosely's "Wrought-Iron Lattice Girder Bridge". It was one of the first iron highway bridges built in Chester County, and is the only one of its kind still in use. The bridge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978, and in 1986 was listed in Historic Highway Bridges in Pennsylvania.

## **KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN**

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### ***Kennedy Covered Bridge***

Located on West Seven Stars Road, north of Kimberton just across the French Creek in East Vincent Township, the original bridge was built in 1856 also utilizing the Burr Arch structure. It was refurbished in 1979 and destroyed by fire in 1986. The bridge was rebuilt in 1987 with a non-flammable wood from Africa called bongossi. This new bridge is a duplicate of the original and is 100 ft long and 14 ft wide and is still in use today.



## **Railroads**

### ***Pickering Valley Railroad***

The Pickering Valley Railroad was organized in Chester Springs in early 1869, but because of a disagreement over its route, construction was not begun until June 1870. From its inception, the Pickering Valley line was a ward of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. It opened in September, 1871, and leased the line for ninety-nine years. The Pickering Valley Railroad was not a large line; it



*Kimberton Train Station (circa 1900)*

ran only about fourteen miles from Byers, near Eagle, to Phoenixville. Completion of the railroad in the fall of 1871 stimulated an economic boom in little Kimberton. The shipping of crops, as well as other cargo, was beneficial to the growth of the town. As a result, it helped pave the way for other local businesses to come into Kimberton. Although once prominent, the economic depression following the Panic of 1893 forced the Pickering Valley Railroad to make cuts in salaries and personnel. This pattern of periodic cutbacks and threats of loss of service continued for the next half-century. Also, the growing popularity of the automobile in the early twentieth century worsened conditions, until passenger service was discontinued in 1934 and the station was exclusively used for moving freight. Freight service continued through World War II, but in 1948, it too ended. The line between Kimberton and Phoenixville remained in sporadic use for some time thereafter, and in 1968, a group of railroad enthusiasts ran a steam excursion train between the two communities, but in the early 1970's, the project was abandoned and the rails were torn up.

### ***“Sow Belly” Railroad***

Located along French Creek, the “Sow Belly Railroad” was built to connect with the granite quarry at St. Peter’s. As the French Creek Branch of the Delaware River and Lancaster Railroad system, the “Sow Belly” connected with the Pickering Valley Railroad branch north of Kimberton and crossed French Creek, upstream from Kennedy Bridge, and entered East Vincent, followed the north side of the creek, crossed the creek and entered into West Vincent, and crossed back into East Vincent, then turned northward to cross Pughtown Road and paralleled that road. Unfortunately, the rail was hastily constructed and poorly built. The line provided both passenger service and freight service. In fact, the rail bed had so many undulations, it was given the name “Sow Belly”. It was built in 1868, but due to poor performance, the line was quickly abandoned.

### **Churches and Cemeteries**



The Pikeland Friends’ Meeting was established by the Quakers in 1758, and in addition to a one-story stone meeting house, they built the **Pikeland Friends Cemetery**. In 1819, a new plot of land for the meeting house and burial ground was established by Emmor Kimber, and is now located on the southeast side of Route 113 at Hare’s Hill Road.

**Centennial Lutheran Church** was established in 1876 and replaced what was the Pikeland Friends Meeting House after the meeting house closed in 1870. The church expanded the standing structure without damaging its integrity or the preserved burial ground.



**Zion Lutheran Church** is located south of Route 724 at Bonnie Brae Road and is one of the oldest church congregations in the area. Established in 1774, the two-story stone church known as Zion Lutheran Church replaced the log structure of what was the German Reformed Congregation of Vincent Township, which dated back to 1733. The stone church was used as a hospital in the Revolutionary War when General George Washington sent wounded from Valley Forge and from the battle of Brandywine to be tended to. In 1861, the old stone church was replaced by the Gothic Revival-style church that exists today.



## KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

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**St. Peter's German Reformed Church and Graveyard** is located on the northeast side of Clover Mill Road on the southeastern slope of the hill. The church was established in 1770. In 1811, a stone church replaced the former log building which was shared with the Evangelical Church congregation on alternating Sundays. It burned down in 1835, but its basic structure can still be seen today.



**St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Graveyard** is located on the northeast side of Clover Mill Road near the top of the hill. The church itself was originally a log structure, but was replaced with a stone structure in 1811, which they shared with the St. Peter's German Reformed Church. The Evangelical Lutheran Church Congregation built its own church in 1841. The new church was renovated in 1889 into the form of a steep roofed, Gothic Revival-style building with tall, pointed-arch windows, and a stuccoed stone exterior.

## Community Supported Agriculture

### What is Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)?

CSA is a relationship of mutual support and commitment between local farmers and community members who pay the farmer an annual membership fee to cover the production costs of the farm. In turn, members receive a weekly share of the harvest during the local growing season. The arrangement guarantees the farmer financial support and enables many small-to moderate-scale organic family farms to remain in business. Ultimately, CSA creates "agriculture-supported communities" where members receive a wide variety of foods harvested at their peak of ripeness, flavor and vitamin and mineral content.



### Local CSAs:



**Kimberton CSA** is a ten acre biodynamic/organic mixed vegetable market garden currently in its 25th year. The first CSA in Pennsylvania, this garden was started in 1987 by interested members of the community, and Barbara and Kerry Sullivan (the farmers). Their goal was to find ways of doing business that would best support the local community and local agriculture, and provide for the needs of everyone involved, including those of our



## KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

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environment.

**Charlestown Farm** is located in Charlestown Township and grows vegetables and small fruits which it sells to local merchants, including the Phoenixville Farmer's Market. The farm is a fairly new establishment which was started by the Anderson family in 2000. Before the Anderson's purchased the land, it was solely used to farm corn and soybeans. When the Anderson's bought the land, they decided to create a CSA in order to grow their products, and organized the Phoenixville Farmer's Market in order to sell locally. The once small CSA has grown to 150 members. The Anderson's run a fully organic farm and use sustainable practices to help conserve energy resources.



**Sankanac Farm** is a diverse organic/biodynamic farm along French Creek in West Vincent Township. The farm is associated with Camphill Village Kimberton Hills, a land-based community that includes adults with developmental disabilities. The farm provides vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers which exhibit the true principles of Biodynamic Agriculture. Some of the available U-pick crops, which you can obtain by being a member of the CSA, are: cherry tomatoes, raspberries, strawberries, culinary herbs and fresh flowers.

**Seven Stars Farm** is a 350 acre certified Biodynamic dairy farm located in neighboring East Vincent Township across from the Kimberton Waldorf School. They use the milk from Jersey cows to produce Seven Stars Organic Yogurt which is sold via natural foods distributors throughout the eastern United States. The farm has been operational since 1988.

## ***VII. Implementation/Heritage Projects***

### **French Creek Trail Project**

The French Creek Trail will extend for two miles and will parallel French Creek between Township Line Road and Hares Hill Road in East Pikeland Township. It will also connect with a trail to be established by French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust (FPCCT) that will reach from the Kennedy Covered Bridge in East Vincent Township northwest to Warwick County Park and the Horse-shoe Trail. It will also eventually connect via the Phoenix Iron Canal Trail to the Schuylkill River Trail to the southeast. The French Creek Trail will cross through the center of the Township, intersecting existing social trails and proposed Township trails, and will be an important component of a permanent regional trail network.



The proposed trail will be designed to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians. However, due to area land use context and length of trail proposed, it is not anticipated that there would be any equestrian use until future trail connections to the rural areas west of the Township are established.

Historic attributes enhance the scenic quality of the proposed trail route, most notably at the Rapps Dam and Hares Hill bridges, and at Snyder's Mill. Ruins of buildings, walls, and mill races lend interest to the area near Rapps Dam, and historic archways for streams can be viewed in three places along the Pickering Valley Railroad grade. From the ruin of Rapps Dam, there are spectacular views in each direction along French Creek.

The Rapps Dam area contained several mills, with the Continental Powder Mill manufacturing gunpowder there in 1776 and 1777. Various types of mills existed in the area until the 1930's, with some remains still visible. The following are identified in the Master Site Development Plan for French Creek Park and Trail:

- **Mill Dam (Rapps Dam)** – This dam provided water for the various mills. Originally constructed of stone, it's most recent rebuilding included the addition of a concrete roadbed that accessed a former picnic grove west of the dam.

## KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

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- **Mill Head and Tail Race** – The mill race that ran the Snyder Mill complex begins at the dam and re-enters French Creek at a number of downstream locations. As evidenced by tail races, the dam provided water for several mills: the Continental Powder Mill and Gun Factory, the Jacob Rudy powder stamping mill, the Thomas Snyder oil & spoke mill, and the Thomas Snyder/George Rapp grist mill.
- **Powder Master Residence and Barn** – Approximately halfway between Rapps Dam Road and Rapps Dam on the abandoned roadway is the ruin of a house and barn, identified as the Powder Master house.
- **Sluice Gate** - The dam structure includes a stone, concrete, and steel sluice gate for the mill race that powered all of the mills. This apparent twentieth century feature likely replaced earlier sluice gates in the same location.
- **Jacob Rudy Powder Mill Ruin** – A 25 by 35 foot structural feature of debris on the north side of the mill race is the probable site of the Jacob Rudy powder mill.
- **Thomas Snyder Oil & Spoke Mill** – Adjacent to Rapps Dam Road on the west side, this mill has been thoroughly documented. The walls were recently restored. Further restoration is planned.
- **Tail Race** – This raceway features a stone and mortar wall and is likely associated with the Snyder/Rapp grist mill.
- **Snyder/Rapp Grist Mill** – There is a heavy concentration of fieldstone and quarried rock on the east side of Rapps Dam Road that is the apparent site of the nineteenth and twentieth century Snyder/Rapp grist mill.
- **Building Ruin** – East of Rapps Dam Road is a 20 foot minimum length remnant wall in an area generally identified as a former militia barracks and workers’ housing site.
- **Rapps Dam Covered Bridge** – This bridge is a historic asset of the French Creek corridor and is owned by PennDOT.

### Assessment

The estimated cost of the trail is \$350,000 (based on French Creek Trail Master Plan Update prepared by township planner, Ed Theurkauf and dated October 5, 2010).

### Strategies

With the exception of the bridges, there are existing social trails in place that require very little in the way of improvement.

A new pedestrian bridge at Rapps Dam will be “donated” by Radio Salvacion, Inc. with installation to take place in 2012. Local Boy Scouts have assisted with trail blazing projects along the Creek.

East Pikeland Township was awarded a grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for \$213,600 in 2012. These funds will be used for a second bridge further upstream on the Creek where a trail easement has been obtained on the Massaro property.

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HERITAGE ACTION PLAN**

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Additional funding is needed to complete the project, including: paving old road from Rapps Dam Road to the new bridge; improving trailheads at Snyder's Mill, Hares Hill Bridge and Township Line Road; and adding linkages to adjacent municipalities.

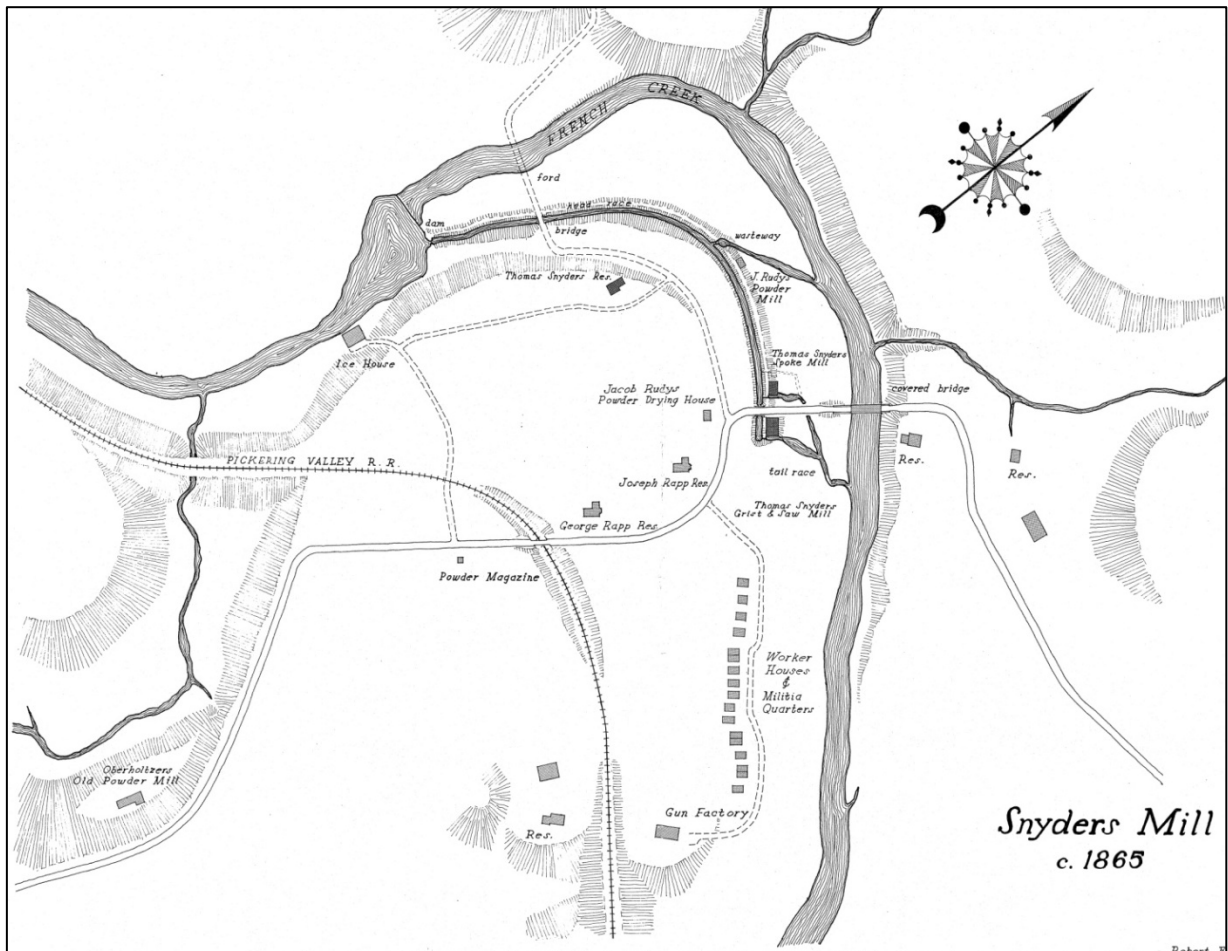
The Planned Trail Network Map and the French Creek Trail Map are attached as Appendix B and Appendix C.

## Continental Powder Works/Heritage Park

The historic powder mill was built in 1776 and was the only powder mill commissioned by the Continental Congress which supplied General Washington's army with gun powder in the early part of the Revolutionary War. The mill was established in a remote area, which is now Kimberton near French Creek, and was designed to be able to produce two tons of powder per week. A gun factory and militia housing were also built at the site later that same year. The mill's superintendent was Peter De Haven. The land consisted of a dam, mill race, powder mill, graining mill, saltpeter house, four drying houses, powder magazine, and a powder master's residence. The mill site was destroyed by the British Army in September 1777. In the years following the Revolutionary War, the property was owned by Casper Snyder, Jr. and his two sons, Henry and Thomas. They built and operated a grist and saw mill, linseed oil mill, and spoke mill.



*Snyder's Oil Mill*





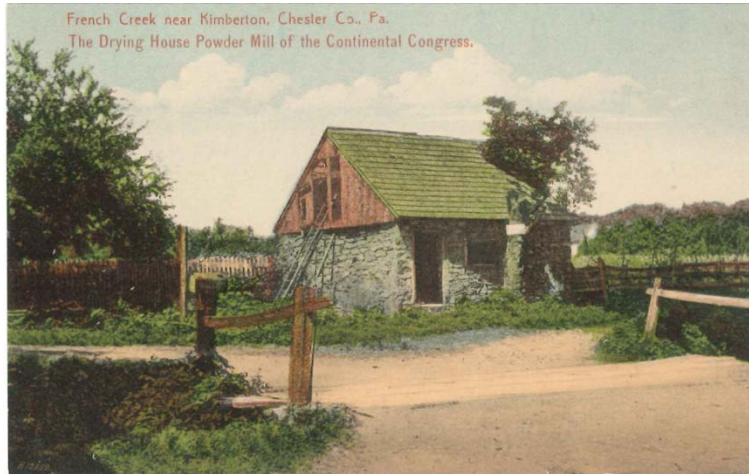
## KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

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### Heritage Park

The Continental Powder Works Historic Park on the French Creek Trail will commemorate the site of the Continental Powder Works. The Park will serve as a wonderful interpretive and educational exhibit for trail visitors. The map of the Heritage Park is shown in Exhibit D.

This project will showcase 11 historic resources along French Creek Trail, explaining their historic significance by means of interpretive signage and markers. Ultimately, there will be exhibit space in Snyder's Mill, once restored. The signage and exhibits will recount the evolution of the site from the Continental Powder Mill of 1776 down through the agricultural mills of the nineteenth century and industrial mills of the 1930s. The Park will place special emphasis on the evolution through history of our township identity and sense of place. Interpretive focus will be given to defining the role and participation of the members of the Pikelands Company and their descendants (down to the present day inhabitants).



*Drying House Powder Mill of the Continental Congress*

The French Creek Trail will connect this park to our neighbors in Phoenixville and East Vincent, extending on to Hopewell Furnace in the northwest.

The Continental Powder Works Historic Park will attract new visitors through partnering with the other sites that exemplify the Park's three different contextual themes:

**Industrial Heritage Corridor/Industrial Revolution:** Because of its proximity to Phoenixville, Spring City/Royersford, Pottstown, Valley Forge, and Warwick and Hopewell Furnaces, the Park will make an attractive addition to the Iron and Steel Heritage Initiative. Special emphasis will be given to the sub-context of Revolutionary War Industrial sites supplying munitions and Washington's race to protect the Schuylkill Valley forges. The interpretation of Revolutionary War Industrial sites is an extremely underserved area of heritage education and addressing this interpretive deficiency will be part of the Park's core mission. The later industrial uses of the mills will be related to the regional and national commerce of their time.

**Agricultural Processing Infrastructure:** Snyder's Mill (believed to have been built on the foundation of the graining mill of the Continental Powder Works) and Rapp's Mill are



## KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

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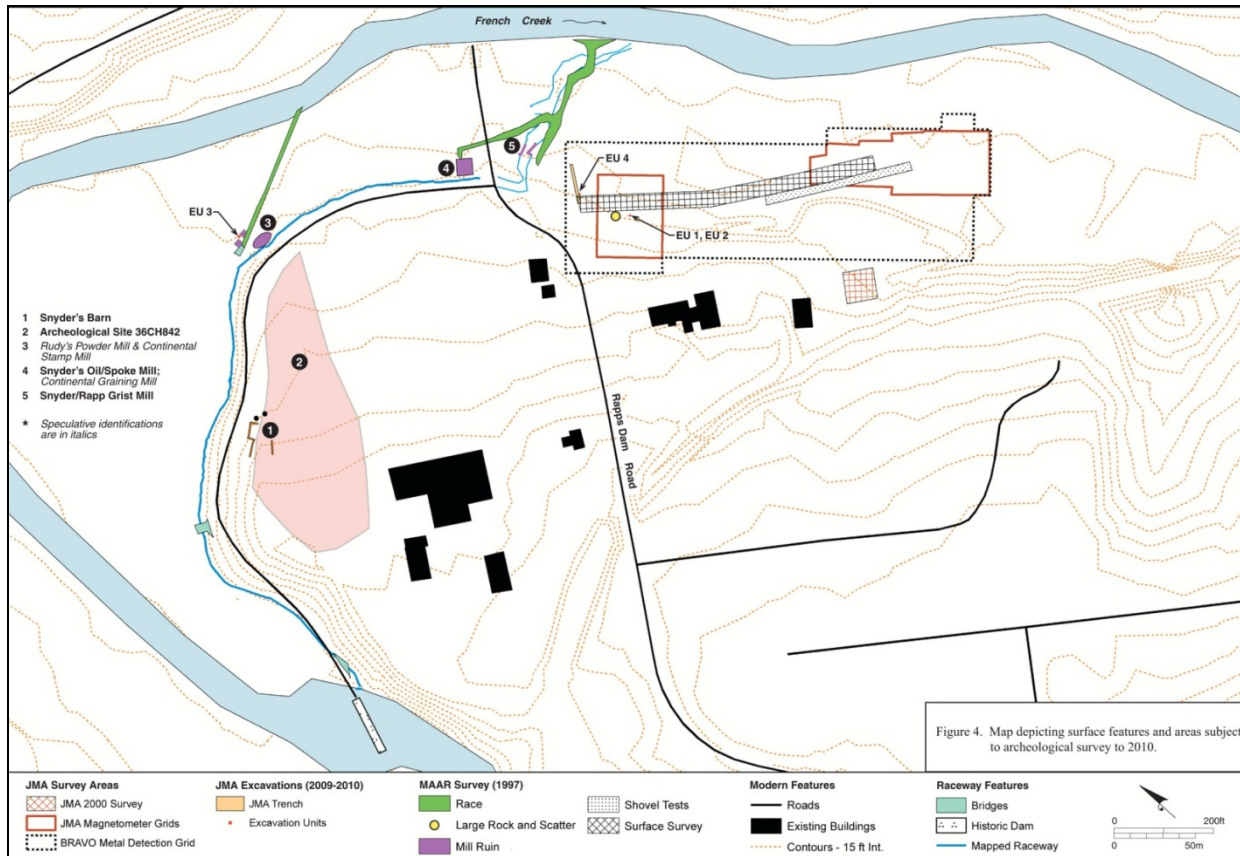
examples of the type of agricultural mills which sprang up in Northern Chester County to service the agrarian economy that also fostered the growth and evolution of Kimberton as an agricultural depot and processing town serving Northern Chester County. The Mills can be compared and contrasted to other mills in the area such as Chrisman's Mill, Prizer's Mill and the Mill at Anselma, and the connections to Kimberton including the Pickering Valley Railroad, which served all of these mills and had its most active depot in Kimberton. A Kimberton Village Trail loop is planned in the future to connect to the French Creek Trail.

**Revolutionary War Trail:** Because of the importance of the Continental Powder Mill complex in supplying George Washington and the Continental troops with ammunition, gun powder and muskets, it will be a great addition to the other revolutionary war historical tourist sites in the Chester County vicinity. Residents and visitors alike will be fascinated to learn the untold story of East Pikeland's connection to the Revolutionary War. Discussions have begun with the other members of the *Philadelphia Campaign of 1777 Consortium* (including Valley Forge, Hopewell Furnace, Yellow Springs, Brandywine Battlefield and Paoli Battlefield) to eventually implement a Revolutionary War Trail; the Revolutionary War Trail may ultimately be expanded to encompass sites in the entire metropolitan area.

The Continental Powder Mill Park will ultimately feature the following wayside exhibits: Rapps Dam, Powder Master Residence and Barn Ruins, Gunpowder Mill Ruin, Graining Mill and Saltpeter House, Drying Houses, Thomas Snyder Oil and Spoke Mill, Rapps Dam Covered Bridge, Rapp's Grist Mill, and the Gunlock Factory and Militia Housing. Signage will ultimately include interpretive signs at each wayside exhibit, informational signs at the trailhead and directional signs at the trailhead and along the trail. Trailhead connections will include a footbridge from the parking lot at Snyder's Mill over the tail race. Trail amenities will include benches, bicycle racks and trash receptacles. Snyder's Mill eventually will be the focal exhibit space within the passive historic park once the next phase of construction starts on the roof, windows, doors, floors, ceilings, mechanicals and lighting, exhibit cases and wall signage. Funding will need to be found for these future phases.

All types of visitors including nature enthusiasts, hikers, cyclists and those with a passion for history will be enticed to discover the historic treasures along the French Creek Trail in East Pikeland Township by visiting The Continental Powder Works Historic Park. The goal is that the Trail and Park function symbiotically by encouraging trail users to become heritage tourists and heritage tourists to become trail users.

# KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN



## Assessment

This project will be tackled in multiple phases. Phase I will include preparation of a concept plan for the Heritage Park, engineering design documents for the restoration of Snyder's Mill, and an archeological study. The Township has recently been awarded a grant for \$42,000 from the American Battlefield Protection Program for an archeological study of the site and determination of eligibility to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, to be completed by December 2012. Phase II will include completion of the Snyder's Mill reconstruction project and development of brochures, interpretive signage and displays. Phase III will involve the promotion of the site through advertising, additional displays and signage. It is anticipated that the project will be completed in 2013, depending on available funding.

## KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

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### Strategies

East Pikeland Township will apply for grant funding to supplement the American Battlefield Protection Program federal grant awarded in August 2011. That grant will be used for an archeological survey and nomination of the site to the National Register. The Township also received a \$10,000 grant from the Schuylkill Highlands in January 2012 for the design and installation of wayside signs at the Heritage Park. Work on this project will begin in Spring 2012. Total estimated cost of the signs is \$23,000. Other grant applications have been submitted to cover the remaining cost of the signs.

It is estimated that it will cost between \$50,000 and \$60,000 for the Phase II project of completing the roof, doors and windows on Snyder's Mill.

The Historical Commission will continue to solicit private donations and lobby State legislators for funding. Other grant programs that will be considered are: PA Historic & Museum Commission, Preserve America, PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Chester County Visitor's Bureau, and the Schuylkill Heritage Area Towns & Tours program.

The Continental Powder Works and Heritage Park will be marketed with brochures; through affiliated resources such as the Revolutionary War Trail partners, Iron & Steel Heritage Area, Covered Bridge Society, Chester County Park & Recreation program; and on various websites.



*Rapps Mill (circa 1917)*

# KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

## “Walkable Kimberton” Project

Returning Kimberton to a more pedestrian friendly community is an essential component in the restoration of the traditional vitality and character of the village; and this is the objective of the “Walkable Kimberton” project.



With public and private input in the form of public meetings and planning sessions, the Kimberton Village Business Association (KVBA) and East Pikeland Township have developed a multi-phase concept plan which will provide safe walking opportunities through the historic business district and trails and walkways through its natural surroundings, with eventual linkages to the French Creek Trail and Schuylkill River Trail.



The initial phase of the plan, Phase I, includes a central plaza between the Kimberton Whole Foods store and the now-vacant lot across Kimberton Road. This plaza is designed for pedestrian interaction, creating outdoor “rooms” for seating, eating, informal community gathering, and shopping, and employs several traffic calming strategies. The construction of this central plaza will help lead the way to a safer, quieter, interactive, walk-able and more enjoyable village.

Generous offers of dedication of ground by KVBA members and funding from the community have gotten the “Walkable Kimberton” initiative off to a strong start, with well-developed plan born of public and private consensus.



## **Assessment**

Phase I of the “*Walkable Kimberton*” is the Plaza project which is well underway at this time. The East Pikeland Township Board of Supervisors has been supportive of this public-private partnership project. The project will include new retail, gourmet food and specialty stores.

It is anticipated that the completion of Phase I of the Plaza will generate substantial momentum towards implementation of the subsequent phases. Phase II includes all the remaining streetscape improvements and an intra-village trail circulation and community areas shown on the *Walkable Kimberton Concept Plan*. Residents have expressed strong support for sidewalk and trail connections.

Phase III will include development of the ponds and wetland areas to provide interpretive enhancement for trail connections that will be implemented by East Pikeland Township.

The overarching objective of the “*Walkable Kimberton*” plan is to restore the Village to sustainability. The project provides the foundation for arts and heritage tourism, and relevant commercial development which will insure that sustainability persists.

## **Strategies and Funding Sources**

The Plaza project will be funded through a combination of private and public financing. The Township will use the funds contributed by a developer specifically for infrastructure improvements in Kimberton Village. It is believed that successful development of the Plaza will demonstrate the importance of the succeeding “*Walkable Kimberton*” Phases and the feasibility of additional sustainable commercial development.

The succeeding phases of “*Walkable Kimberton*” will be financed through a combination of grants, developer contributions and possibly Township funds.

KVBA is expanding its successful arts sponsorship program which so far has included two performances of Shakespeare in the Park. In 2012, in addition to a Shakespeare performance (*Loves Labor Lost*), KVBA intends to sponsor at least one chamber music concert and potentially other concerts. A possible future arts facility will likely be financed by a combination of grants, Rehabilitation Tax Credits and developer equity. Commercial projects will be financed by private developers.



## **Interpretive Signage Project**



East Pikeland Township will undertake a program to design and install signs explaining historic and other cultural aspects of East Pikeland Township.

Signs will be placed at trailheads, parks, significant historic structures (Rapps Dam Bridge, Silver bridge, Kennedy Bridge, mills, railroad bed and railroad station); in historic areas (Kimberton Village, Prizer’s Mill complex) and at historic sites without structures (Continental Powder Works, iron ore mine pits, railroad beds); near natural

features (French Creek) and to designate cultural/political features (Village of Kimberton, Underground Railroad, French Creek Boarding School for Girls).

## **Assessment**

Due to a generous grant from the Schuylkill Highlands organization, funding is already available for wayside signs along the French Creek Trail to provide historic interpretation of the Continental Powder Works. A detailed sign plan will be developed for the rest of the township and will include: identification of sign locations, priority of installation, phasing of installation, text on individual signs, research on federal/state statute compliance, long-term maintenance plan, budget, and funding sources.

## **Strategies**

Signs are to be designed following guidelines provided by Schuylkill River Heritage Area program, including design criteria, colors, fonts, Federal and State requirements, universal graphics, length/width and height requirements. Signs should be “sustainable” and meet environmental “green” standards.

## **Funding Sources**

- Local Businesses (Kimberton Village Business Association)
- Grants
- Charitable Organizations and individuals
- East Pikeland Township
- Local Fundraising



## ***VIII. Marketing and Outreach***

There are two focal emphases in the Marketing and Outreach section of the Heritage Action Plan:

- 1) To market the Kimberton Area comprehensively as a Heritage Tourist Destination, and
  - 2) To market the Continental Powder Works Heritage Park in the context of a stop on a potential Revolutionary War Trail that would include Chester County's role in the Philadelphia Campaign of 1777.
- 

### **1) Kimberton Area Marketing Plan**

***Marketing Goal:*** Increase awareness of Kimberton as a destination for visitors.

***Marketing Strategies:***

- Identify intended audiences to be engaged
- Address how programs will be designed and delivered based on various audiences
- Design a campaign to deliver the message
- Develop communications elements and public relations approach
- Execute the campaign

### **Marketing/Communications Promotion and Outreach Tactics**

The objective is to develop an image and integrate a variety of communication elements that will help establish Kimberton as a destination for visitors.

***Marketing Deliverables: Logo/Tagline***



When creating a logo it is important to consider not only how it will be used, but to address what the expectations are for its use. The tagline, *Discover Kimberton*, not only

## KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

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encourages visitors to come and explore the history and beauty that is Kimberton; it can easily be incorporated into local business marketing activities. For example:

*Discover Kimberton – Enjoy the Food and Hospitality of the Kimberton Inn*

*Discover Kimberton – Real Food. Local Roots™ at Kimberton Whole Foods*



*The Kimberton Inn is Member of the Kimberton Village Business Association*

### ***Deliverables: Website Presence***

- Website

Develop and maintain a professional internet presence by creating a website that will inform visitors about the historic nature of Kimberton and provide a calendar of upcoming events. It is a valuable resource for displaying news, advertising monthly newsletters and events, etc. It will feature links to local businesses, local town websites, visitors' bureaus, parks and battlefields, etc.

- Landing Page

Website marketing will be a multi-tiered approach that will maximize the exposure of the *Discover Kimberton* landing page. The first effort will be to create a landing page that describes what *Discover Kimberton* is about, the historical sites to see and enjoy, and a calendar of upcoming events.

- Website Links

- The East Pikeland Township website ([www.eastpikeland.org](http://www.eastpikeland.org)) will contain the landing page link on their home page.
- Kimberton Village Business Association ([www.walkablekimberton.org](http://www.walkablekimberton.org)) will contain the landing page link of the Walkable Kimberton website.
- Local Kimberton businesses will add the *Discover Kimberton* link to their websites.

To promote *Discover Kimberton*, the following are websites where a mutual partnership will be pursued to encourage tourism for Kimberton as well as the partner

## KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN

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site. We will continue to identify other future partners where the *Discover Kimberton* landing page can be promoted. The following is a list of potential partners:

- Local Town Websites
  - Phoenixville ([www.phoenixville.org](http://www.phoenixville.org))
- Visitors Bureaus
  - Valley Forge Visitors Bureau ([www.valleyforge.org](http://www.valleyforge.org))
  - Chester County Tourist Bureau ([www.brandywinevalley.com](http://www.brandywinevalley.com))
  - Philadelphia Tourism Bureau ([www.visitphilly.com](http://www.visitphilly.com))
- Parks & Battlefields
  - Valley Forge National Historical Park ([www.nps.gov/vafo/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/vafo/index.htm))
  - Brandywine Battlefield ([www.brandywinebattlefield.org](http://www.brandywinebattlefield.org) and [www.brandywinevalley.com](http://www.brandywinevalley.com))
  - The Philadelphia Campaign of 1777 ([www.ushistory.org/march/phila](http://www.ushistory.org/march/phila))
- Furnaces & Mills
  - Johanna Furnace ([www.haycreek.org/joanna\\_furnace.htm](http://www.haycreek.org/joanna_furnace.htm))
  - The Mill at Anselma ([www.anselmamill.org](http://www.anselmamill.org))

### ***Deliverables: Literature***

- Brochure – Create a trifold brochure that will highlight Kimberton history. This brochure will be distributed at visitors’ centers, parks, East Pikeland Township facilities and local businesses.

### ***Deliverables: Market Outreach***

- Print Advertising – Fractional and full page ads will be created. Media locations will be identified and evaluated.
- Radio - Small 15 and 30 second slots can be developed for targeted radio stations.
- Press Releases – Press releases will be distributed to print and electronic media by promoting special events and *Discover Kimberton* walking tours.

### ***Deliverables: Kimberton Walking Tour Map***

A map for a walking tour of Kimberton with business ads around the perimeter will be created. On the front side is a map of downtown Kimberton illustrating historic sites, local eateries, etc. Local business can contribute small ads for outer edges of map. The back of the map will detail the historic nature of the town, its history and that of its surrounding areas.

### ***Deliverables: Community Outreach Education***

Lectures on historic buildings and areas will be available for presentation to local community groups, schools and retirement communities. Walking tour maps and/or brochures will be made available at various locations.

## **KIMBERTON AREA HERITAGE ACTION PLAN**

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- Local Schools, Colleges and Universities
  - Phoenixville and Great Valley School Districts
  - West Chester University, Ursinus College, Montgomery County Community College and others
- Community Groups
  - Phoenixville and Chester County Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions clubs
- Retirement Communities
  - Coldstream Crossing, Phoenixville, PA, Hershey's Mill, West Chester, PA and Shannondell, Audubon, PA

### **Marketing/Communications Implementation Tactics:**

#### ***Deliverables: Advertising/Marketing Consultant***

- Retain an advertising/marketing consultant to implement marketing/communication strategies including defining target audience, identifying media outlets, developing and producing ads/literature, website, etc.

#### ***Deliverables: Information Kiosks***

- Information kiosks could be placed in several locations throughout the township. The kiosk locations would be noted on the walking tour map.

#### ***Deliverables: Additional Promotional Outreach***

- Special Kimberton Day/Weekend
- Creation of special flags that could be mounted to poles throughout the area

## **2) Continental Powder Works Heritage Park**

**Introduction:** Informal discussions have been held with representatives of organizations that also promote the role they played in *The Philadelphia Campaign of 1777*, including Valley Forge National Historic Park, Hopewell Furnace, Historic Yellow Springs, Brandywine Battlefield Historic Site and Paoli Battlefield. The goal is to form a consortium of these organizations and eventually implement a Revolutionary War Trail. With the exception of Valley Forge Park and Brandywine Battlefield Historic Site, the individual Revolutionary War sites are not perceived as heritage tourist destinations, but rather as places to visit for those already living in or visiting the area. The sites have suffered in recent years from significant funding shortfalls due to the economy and diminished state support. Brandywine Battlefield has been particularly threatened and would likely not have remained open without the help of its Friends of Brandywine Battlefield organization. The establishment of a Chester County/Philadelphia Campaign Revolutionary War Trail will unify the sites into a touring destination with the critical mass to attract heritage tourists from outside the area.

### **Marketing Goals:**

- To market the battlefield and industrial sites of *The Philadelphia Campaign of 1777* Consortium in a comprehensive trail/tour format in order to substantially increase site visitor counts and enhance site sustainability.
- To make the Chester County/Philadelphia Campaign Revolutionary War Trail a heritage tourist destination.
- To ultimately expand *The Philadelphia Campaign of 1777* trail idea to include Germantown, Hatboro, Whitemarsh, Fort Mifflin, Red Bank and Monmouth.

**Marketing Strategy:** To market the Philadelphia Campaign Revolutionary War Trail as a destination to Heritage Tourists.

### **Marketing Partners:**

- **Revolutionary War Trail Site Partners** – Continental Powder Works, Valley Forge National Historic Park, Hopewell Furnace, Historic Yellow Springs, Brandywine Battlefield Historic Site, Paoli Battlefield and eventually the American Revolution Center.
- **Interpretive Partners** - The American Revolution Center, Chester County Historical Society, Chester County Historic Preservation Network, site area historic societies, site “Friends” organizations.
- **Promotion Partners** – Schuylkill River Heritage Association, Chester County Visitors Bureau, Chester County Historic Preservation Network, Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau.

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- **Business Partners** – Tour bus operator, trail participant hotels/ inns and restaurants, travel agents.

### **Marketing/Communications Promotion and Outreach Tactics**

**Marketing Objective:** To enable *The Philadelphia Campaign of 1777* Consortium member sites to become more self-sustaining through greatly enhanced visitor counts and revenue.

#### **Deliverables: Trail Tours**

- Self-Guided Tours
  - Traditional Visitors Maps
  - Cell Phone or App based tablet tours
  - Interpretive Signage – professionally designed wayside signs will be placed along the French Creek Trail to provide facts and narratives about the Continental Powder Works.
- Guided Tours
  - Luxury bus tours to include sites, historic inns and restaurants
  - Self-Driven Trail

#### **Deliverables: Promotion**

- **Logo/Tagline** – develop a logo that will encourage visitors to come and explore the history and beauty of the Continental Powder Works heritage site along the scenic French Creek.
  - **Website** – similar to Kimberton Village plan above, however instead of an individual website the information will be developed through links on other websites, such as East Pikeland Township and other partners.
- **Brochures**
  - French Creek Trail Map will identify significant historic structures that existed at the Continental Powder Works. Map will indicate location of wayside signs.

#### **Deliverables: Outreach and Education**

- Media
  - Print
  - Press Releases
- Local Schools, Colleges and Universities
  - Phoenixville and Great Valley School Districts
  - West Chester University, Ursinus, Montgomery County Community College and others
- Community Groups
  - Phoenixville and Chester County Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions clubs



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**Proposed Marketing Partnerships**

<u>POSSIBLE PARTNERS</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE NUMBER</u>	<u>CONTACT PERSON</u>
<b>Brandywine Battlefield</b> <a href="http://www.ushistory.org/BRANDYWINE/">http://www.ushistory.org/BRANDYWINE/</a>	US Route 1 Chadds Ford, PA	610-495-3342	
<b>The Friends of Brandywine Battlefield</b> <a href="http://www.brandywinebattlefield.org/">http://www.brandywinebattlefield.org/</a>	1491 Baltimore Pike, PO Box 202 Chadds Ford, PA 19317	610-459-3342	President Richard Bowers
<b>East Brandywine Historical Commission</b> <a href="http://www.ebrandywine.org/ebhistory.html">http://www.ebrandywine.org/ebhistory.html</a>	1214 Horseshoe Pike Downingtown, PA 19335	610-269-8230	Member John Black
<b>West Brandywine Historical Commission</b> <a href="http://www.wbrandywine.org">http://www.wbrandywine.org</a>	198 Lafayette Road Coatesville, PA 19320	610-380-8200	Chairman Hugh Redditt, Jr
<b>Charlestown Historical Society</b> <a href="http://www.charlestown.org/ctwww_chs.asp">http://www.charlestown.org/ctwww_chs.asp</a>	4030 Whitehorse Rd, PO Box 344 Devault, PA 19432	610-240-0326 Township #	John Pittock
<b>Chester County Historic Preservation Network</b> <a href="http://www.cchpn.org/">http://www.cchpn.org/</a>	PO Box 174 West Chester, PA 19381	877-442-2476	President Bruce Knapp
<b>Chester County Historical Society</b> <a href="http://www.chestercohistorical.org/">http://www.chestercohistorical.org/</a>	225 North High Street West Chester, PA 19380	610-692-4066	Rob Lukens
<b>Chester County Park &amp; Rec/Hist. Dept. Archives</b> <a href="http://dsf.chesco.org/ccparks/site/default.asp">http://dsf.chesco.org/ccparks/site/default.asp</a>	601 Westtown Road, Suite 080 West Chester, PA 19380	610-344-6760	Director Laurie Rofini
<b>Covered Bridge Society</b> <a href="http://www.coveredbridgesociety.org/">http://www.coveredbridgesociety.org/</a>	National Society for the Preservation Of Covered Bridges	bill@lostbridges.com	David Wright
<b>French &amp; Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust</b> <a href="http://www.frenchandpickering.org/">http://www.frenchandpickering.org/</a>	511 Kimberton Road Phoenixville, PA 19460	610-933-7751	President Cary Leptuck

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<b>Green Valleys Association</b> <a href="http://www.greenvalleys.org/">http://www.greenvalleys.org/</a>	1368 Prizer Road Pottstown, PA 19465	610-469-4990	Ex. Director Victoria 610-469-7543
<b>Hopewell Furnace (National Historic Site)</b> <a href="http://www.nps.gov/hofu/index.htm">http://www.nps.gov/hofu/index.htm</a>	2 Mark Bird Lane Elverson, PA 19520	610-582-8773	
<b>Iron &amp; Steel Heritage Program</b>	<i>See Chester County Parks &amp; Rec</i>		
<b>National Iron &amp; Steel Heritage Museum-Lukens</b> <a href="http://www.lukensnhd.org/">http://www.lukensnhd.org/</a>	76 South First Avenue Coatesville, PA 19320	610-384-9282	
<b>Kimberton Village Business Association - KVBA</b> <a href="http://www.walkablekimberton.org/">http://www.walkablekimberton.org/</a>	PO Box 1 Kimberton, PA 19442	215-208-4196	Treasurer Jonathan Gayl
<b>Lock 60 (Schuylkill Canal Association)</b> <a href="http://www.schuylkillriver.org">http://www.schuylkillriver.org</a>	400 Towpath Road Mont Clare, PA 19453	610-917-0021	President Richard Matosky
<b>Mill at Anselma</b> <a href="http://www.anselmamill.org/">http://www.anselmamill.org/</a>	1730 Conestoga Road, PO Box 42 Chester Springs, PA 19425	610-827-1906	Chair Charlie Jordan
<b>Paoli Battlefield</b> <a href="http://www.paolibattlefield.org/index.htm">http://www.paolibattlefield.org/index.htm</a>	1 <sup>st</sup> Avenue & Wayne Avenue Malvern, PA 19355	866-650-7273	
<b>Phoenixville Chamber of Commerce</b> <a href="http://www.phoenixvillechamber.org/">http://www.phoenixvillechamber.org/</a>	171 East Bridge Street Phoenixville, PA 19460	610-933-3070	
<b>Phoenixville Historical Society</b> <a href="http://hspa-pa.org/">http://hspa-pa.org/</a>	204 Church Street Phoenixville, PA 19460	610-935-7646	
<b>Phoenixville Iron Works</b> <a href="http://www.phoenixvillefoundry.org/index.html">http://www.phoenixvillefoundry.org/index.html</a>	Schuylkill River Heritage 2 N. Main Street, Phoenixville	610-935-2181	<a href="mailto:info@phoenixfoundry.com">info@phoenixfoundry.com</a>
<b>Pikeland Historical Society</b>		610-933-7328	Doug Fitzsimons

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<b>Valley Forge National Park</b> <a href="http://www.nps.gov/vafo/index.htm">http://www.nps.gov/vafo/index.htm</a>	1400 North Outer Line Drive King of Prussia, PA 19406	Welcome Center 610-783-1060	
<b>Yellow Springs (Historic)</b> <a href="http://www.yellowsprings.org/">http://www.yellowsprings.org/</a>	PO Box 62 Chester Springs, PA 19425	610-827-7414 x 19	
<b>Kimberton CSA</b> <a href="http://www.kimbertoncsa.org/">http://www.kimbertoncsa.org/</a>	PO Box 192 Kimberton, PA 19442		
<b>Charlestown Farm</b> <a href="http://www.charlestowncooperativefarm.org/">http://www.charlestowncooperativefarm.org/</a>	2565 Charlestown Road Phoenixville, PA 19460	610-917-0252	Melissa Ingaglio, Farm Manager
<b>Sankanac Farm</b> <a href="http://www.localharvest.org/sankanac-csa-M13909">http://www.localharvest.org/sankanac-csa-M13909</a>	1731 French Creek Road Phoenixville, PA 19460		D. Todd Newlin
<b>Seven Stars Farm</b> <a href="http://www.sevenstarsfarm.com/">http://www.sevenstarsfarm.com/</a>	501 W. Seven Stars Road Phoenixville, PA 19460	610-935-1949	David and Edie Griffiths
<b>Chester County Economic Development Council</b> <a href="http://www.cceconomicdevelopment.com/">http://www.cceconomicdevelopment.com/</a>	Eagleview Corporate Center 737 Constitution Drive Exton, PA 19341	610-458-5700	
<b>Camphill Schools</b> <a href="http://www.camphill.org/">http://www.camphill.org/</a>	Camphill Association of NA 84 Camphill Road, Copake, NY 12516	518-329-4851	
<b>The Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society of PA, Inc.</b>	bridges63@comcast.net		
<b>American Battlefield Protection Program</b> <a href="http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/abpp/">http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/abpp/</a>	1201 "Eye" Street, NW (2255) Washington, DC 20005	202- 513-7270	

## ***IX. Managing and Improving***

This section of the HAP brings the resources, projects and marketing together with a strategy for growth and sustainability. The historic resources are the core of what makes the community unique and interesting as a place to live as well as a destination. Existing and proposed ordinances protect the resources, projects enhance them and create linkages, and finally, marketing makes the community more accessible. A management plan involving public and private partnerships, and commercial and non-profits in the immediate area and greater region will enable economic development that uses the historic resources and heritage tourism as a sustainable program for growth.

### **Existing Management Tools**

- Township Comprehensive Plan;
- Historical Commission Ordinance;
- Historic Survey and Map updated by the Historical Commission;
- Design Guidelines for the Kimberton Village National Register Historic District;
- Preserve America National recognition;
- East Pikeland Township dedicates funds every year towards the education of its Historical Commission members, and for professional consulting resources on an as-needed basis.

The Historical Commission has worked closely with township staff and elected officials to develop a coordinated set of guidelines for managing our historic resources. These resources consist of individual buildings, sites, roads, trails, bridges, or cultural artifacts identified on the recently updated Designated Historic Resources List and Map.

The List is a living document where information about the existing resources is collected and organized to provide a foundation for further research, and a basis for evaluating proposed changes to the resources under the Historic Resource Protection ordinance. It is also incumbent on the Historical Commission to propose additions to the list as research uncovers information about properties not already listed.

The Historical Commission is just one of several township boards that have overlapping and complementary purviews which relate to the defining characteristics of East Pikeland Township. Under the Comprehensive Plan, open space, trails, parks, historic resources, commerce and agriculture are all considered for their roles in creating and maintaining the character which the Heritage Action Plan addresses and promotes.

An essential part of the HAP is a marketing plan that creates linkages between the historic sites, places and businesses and the local residents, as well as the target audience of regional partners and greater public. Making Kimberton a destination for as broad an audience as

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possible is a multimedia undertaking using print, broadcast, and social media. Pursuing the strategy of plucking the “low hanging fruit”, the marketing outreach can use the text and visual components of the historical signage program to be funded with the initial grants. Other on-hand material can be used for brochures. The township web site can be expanded to a “Discover Kimberton” site that contains local information and links to regional partners. The marketing initiative will require a coordinated effort by the Township, Kimberton Village Business Association, and the East Pikeland Historical Commission.

### **Improving**

Improvements for our historic resources and making the plan bear fruit in increased awareness of these resources by local residents and visitors will come about by implementing the identified projects and making sustainable partnerships with the organizations listed in the HAP. Towards that goal, several grant applications have been made with a focus on the most achievable projects. The shorter term goals are focused on increasing awareness among local residents, and then the public at large, regarding local historic resources and how their protection and promotion is important to the community. The implementation of a marketing plan along with supporting signage highlighting the resources will be an important first step that can be implemented for a modest cost. Historical signage is the logical first step in the implementation of the plan, for several reasons:

- Low Cost;
- Materials have multiple uses in different media – print, physical objects and electronic;
- Immediate visibility and public impact.

Other grants and initiatives are directed to longer term projects such as the rehabilitation of Snyder’s Mill and the Continental Powder Works historic district.

- Grant applications applied for in November 2011:
  - Schuylkill Highlands grant - \$10,000 for historic markers and signage. (Successful)
  - PECO Open Space grant - \$10,000 for historic markers and signage. (Pending)
- Grant applications applied for in January 2012:
  - Certified Local Government grant through the PA Historical and Museum Commission – requested \$25,000 towards developing design guidelines that will be applicable to Kimberton Village and other historic resources in the township
- Future grant applications:
  - Schuylkill River Heritage Area – Unspecified amount for follow-up projects related to the French Creek Trail and its linkages to the Continental Powder Works/Snyder’s Mill project area.

## **Moving Forward**

The Heritage Action Plan is supported by the Township's Board of Supervisors, but the ongoing management and development is the responsibility of the East Pikeland Historical Commission, as stated in the duties and responsibilities of the Commission in township ordinances. The inclusiveness of the Plan encourages a broad based cooperative set of initiatives with other township boards and civic and business associations. As part of the marketing and outreach plan, other affinity groups from outside the township will be invited to partner with us to increase the critical mass and coordination of regional efforts related to the Schuylkill River Heritage Area.

As part of the evaluation of our township's historic resources, the HAP team evaluated each of the resources and assigned them a score based on the physical condition of the resource, and the contribution the resource could make to the identified projects. This Scoreboard of Historic Resources was used to identify the short term objectives of the Historical Commission related to our projects, and is as follows:

- Begin to get infrastructure in place to improve the lower scores on the Scoreboard of Historic Resources, since that was the most consistent shortcoming on the scorecard.
- For low scoring resources, discuss specific areas for improvement (interpretive signage, install public facilities, etc.).
- On resources with higher scores, move forward with projects that can make a quick impact; notably increasing public awareness.
- Use the highest scoring resources as the pilot projects - The French Creek Trail, and Kimberton Village ("Walkable Kimberton" and the focus on the Arts).
- For the future management of our resources, cite examples such as a "Friends of Snyder's Mill", "Citizens Cleanup of the French Creek Trail", and the continued support of our Public Works Department.
- We have begun to foster private organizations as official partners to assist our efforts and provide funding for our projects (Pikeland Historical Society, Kimberton Village Business Association).

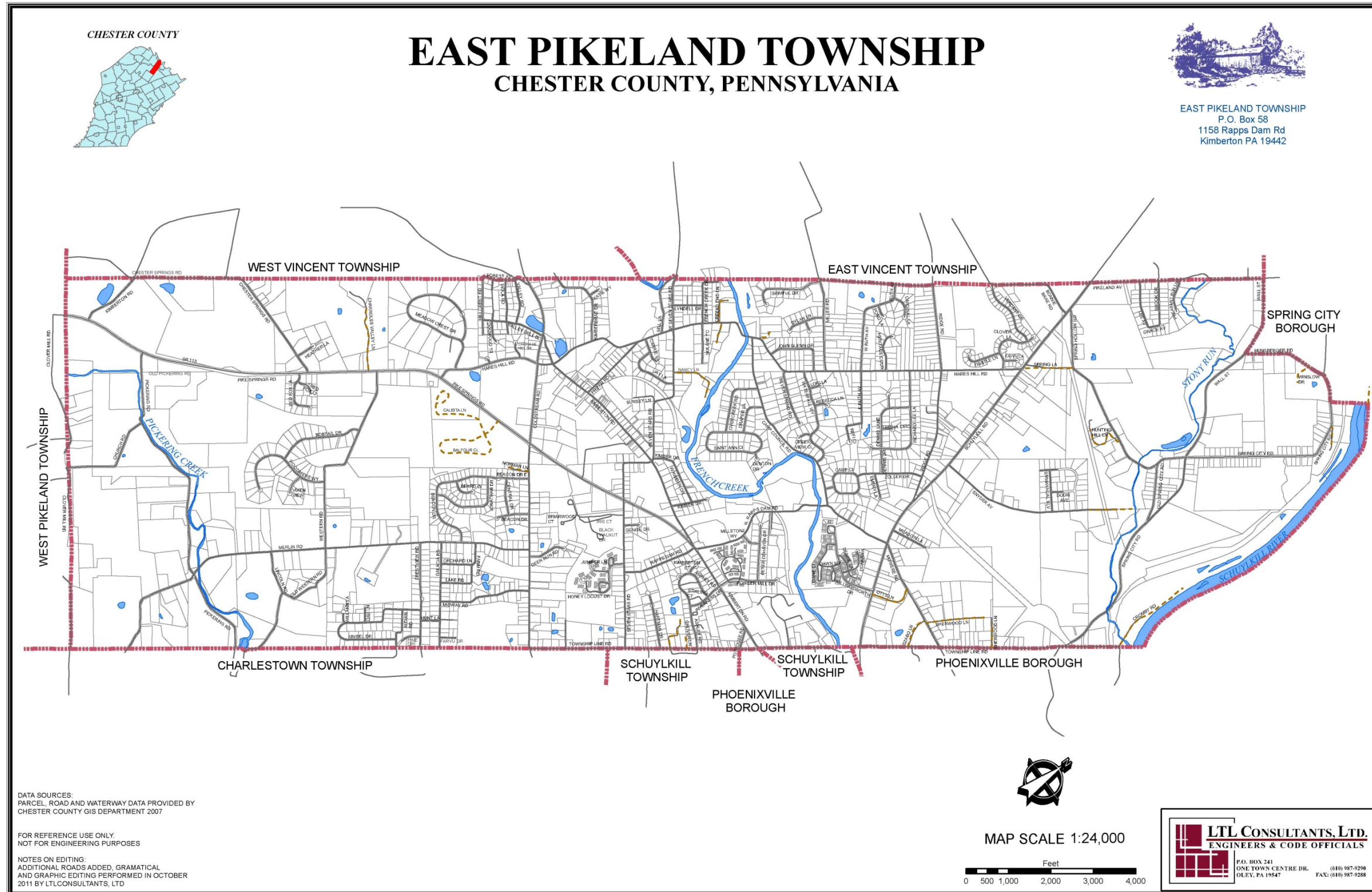


## **Conclusion**

The East Pikeland Historical Commission and the Township have had a successful record of winning grants that are mutually supportive of projects and initiatives that support the cause of historic preservation, heritage tourism and economic development utilizing our unique heritage resources. Combining the recreational potential of natural resources such as French and Pickering Creeks with the preservation and adaptive re-use of historic resources in their proximity broadens the appeal of the Heritage Action Plan beyond the core constituency of the Historical Commission. Add the support of the Kimberton Village Business Association, and a key commercial component comes into place. With additional support from local educational institutions, the third leg of the stool will be in place, making heritage appreciation the common theme behind recreation, commerce and education. Our project plan for beginning with signage and outreach will underpin this broad based initiative.

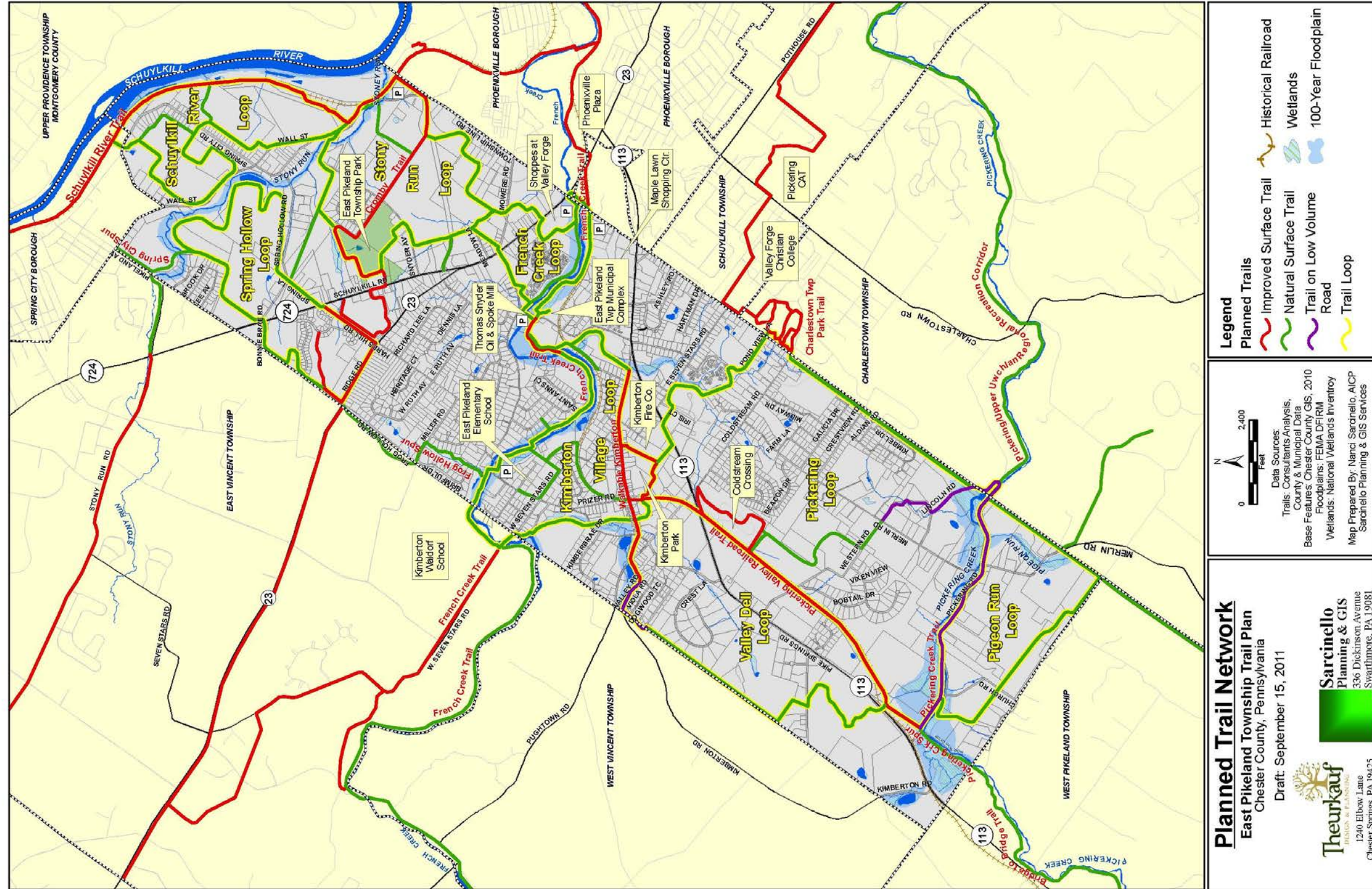
The key to managing and improving is to have a plan in place, which is what the Heritage Action Plan is. The success will be dependent on a broad based approach, a combination of grass roots citizen involvement with guidance from the appropriate local boards, elected officials and professional staff. The progress in achieving the initial goals of the plan will make it easier to partner with the other local and regional organizations we have identified, further increasing the critical mass of the heritage area, and reducing the individual burdens on localities with their own plans. Our heritage resources are truly unique assets which, if properly managed, can be the cornerstone for economic development while maintaining the qualities of place the local residents appreciate. The number of themes represented in the Heritage Action Plan provides a strong base for our own local improvements as well as outreach to the region.

**Appendix A – East Pikeland Township Map**



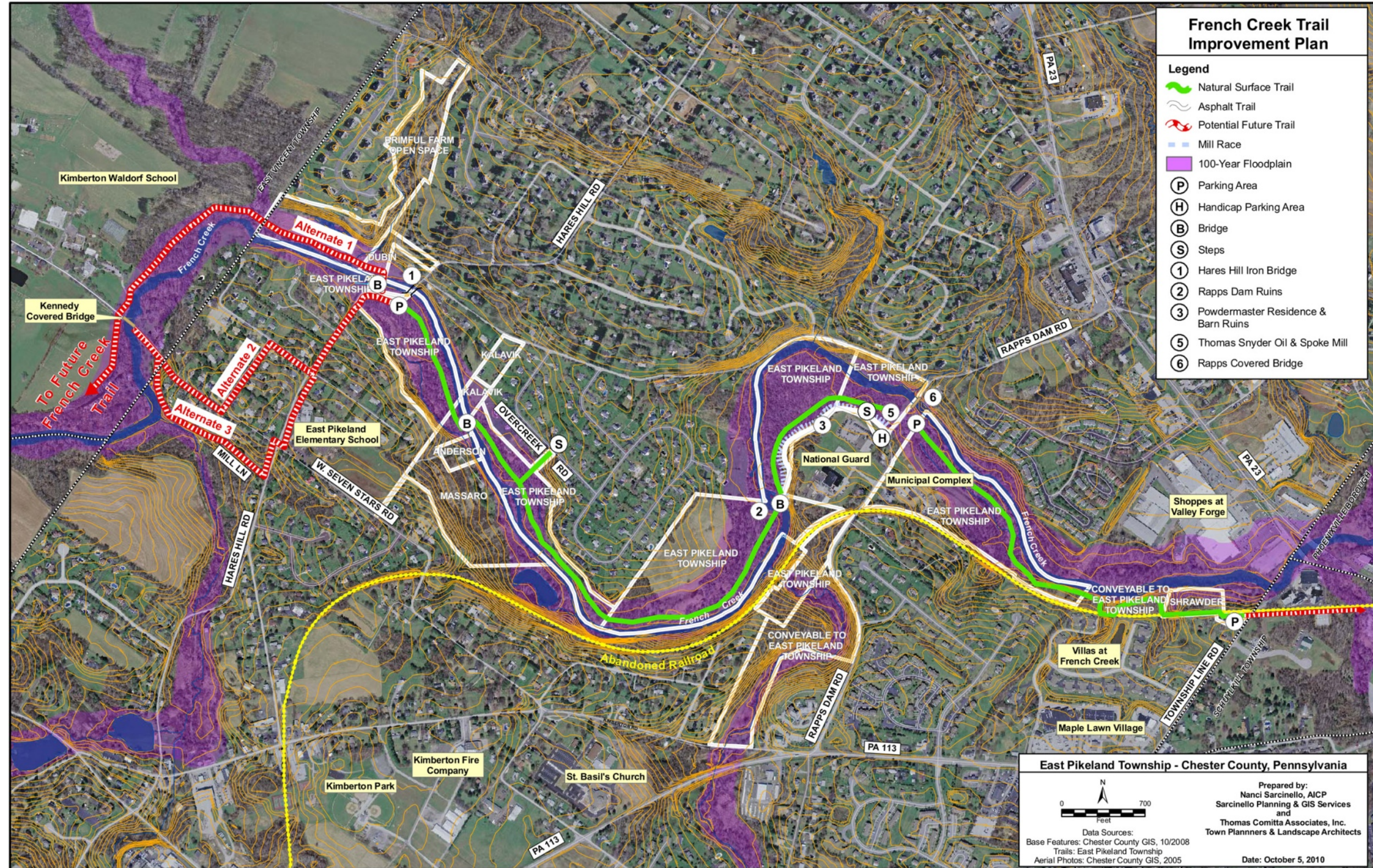


Appendix B – Planned Trail Network Map





Appendix C – French Creek Trail Improvement Plan





Appendix D – Continental Powder Works Heritage Park Map

